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# Some of the Everetts

BY  
FREMONT EVERETT

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## PART I



## SOME OF THE EVERETTS.

### PART I

Portland, Oregon, January, 1916.

I, Fremont Everett, being now in my sixty-first year and realizing that I probably know as much of the history of the Everett family as I ever shall know, and realizing further that no person of the many that could do a better job is likely to undertake it, and that the slight knowledge that we have of the doings of our forefathers will perish with my generation unless put on paper:

I therefore undertake at this time to put in a little book, such facts as I have been able to gather concerning our people, to the end that the Everetts of coming generations may know and take pride in the fact that their ancestors have had no insignificant part in the work that has built up this mighty nation.

If there exists anywhere a record of when the first Everett landed in America, I am ignorant of the fact.

But tradition says that very early in the settlement of New England, three Everett brothers came over together. This was probably very soon after the settlement of Boston, for at least one of the brothers settled near that place.

As early as about 1700, several families of Everetts were living at Dedham, not far from Boston.



It is much to be regretted that some account of the life of these early settlers has not been preserved, for the old stock were ever bold, hardy, adventurous men—born pioneers.

Knowing their natures and the character of their descendants, of whom I am about to write, we may be sure that they were ever where danger lured and duty called. In this record of dry facts, I may not call much on my imagination or that of my readers, but of this am sure, that whenever Indian raids called for defense and punishment, those daredevil ancestors of ours were not in the rear.

The first of these of which I have authentic record was William Everett, whom I designate as William Everett I. Of him I know nothing excepting that he married Mary Thorpe, that he was born in 1705, and that he was the father of Josiah Everett, the 1st.

Josiah Everett, the 1st, son of William Everett, the 1st, was born October 19, 1733, probably at Dedham, Mass., and married Jane Alexander. He died in 1814 at Dedham at the ripe age of eighty-one years. Of him I know nothing except that he was the father of Josiah Everett, the 2nd, who is the ancestral hero of our family.

Josiah Everett, the 2nd, son of Josiah Everett, the 1st, and his wife, nee Jane Alexander, was born at Dedham, Mass., in 1760, and died at New Portland, Summerset County, Maine, March 16, 1848, at the age of eighty-eight years. He was one of triplets and the names of the others were Alexander and Jane. All lived to grow up.





## JOSIAH EVERETT SECOND.

This man, Josiah Everett, the 2nd, was a most remarkable character. Judging from what we know of him, he must have been what we nowadays would call rather a "tough" boy. At any rate, he seems to have taken his fate and his life in his own hands at an age when most of our present day boys are in grammar school, for, at the age of fifteen, we find him in the battle of Lexington.

Volume V of Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolution, page 426, says:

"Everet, Josiah (in many of the old records the final 't' is omitted), Dedham, private, Captain William Bullard's Company, of South Parish of Dedham, Col. Heath's Regiment, which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775; service eight days."

We have no connected history of his services, but I give herewith all the record that history gives of a private soldier, which, made at a time when records were scanty, gives but the barest skeleton of the service that he rendered his country in her hour of need.

These records are all taken from the Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolution above referred to:

"Everett, Josiah, Dedham, private, Cap-



tain John Gay's Company, November 29, 1776.

"Everett, Josiah, private, Captain Lemuel May's Company, Col. McIntosh's Regiment; joined March 23, 1778; service 25 days at Roxbury lines.

"Everett, Josiah, Captain Robert Davis, June 5th, 1778, age 18, stature 5 ft. 6 in., dark hair and eyes.

"Everett, Josiah, descriptive list of men raised in Suffolk County, in 1779 to serve in the Continental Army; Captain Battle's Company, age 19 years—stature 5 ft. 7½ inches; complexion dark; engaged for town of Dedham; delivered to Ensign Edward White; also list of men returned as received of Maj. Stephen Badlam, Supt. for Suffolk County, by Justin Ely, Commissioner, at Springfield, September 20, 1779.

"Everett, Josiah, Dedham, payroll for six months men, raised town of Dedham for service in the Continental Army during 1780.

"Marched July 17, 1780; discharged September 24, 1780; service 5 months and 14 days.

"Everett, Josiah, marine, State Ship *Tarter*, commanded by Captain John Cathcart;



engaged May 18, 1782; service 6 months and 8 days; roll sworn at Boston."

It will be seen from these records that this distinguished ancestor of ours commencing with the very beginning of the Revolution, and when a mere child of fifteen, enlisted at least six times, and must have served practically through the whole war.

When he enlisted the first time he must have been far from having completed his growth, for three years later, when he enlisted for service under Captain Robert Davis, the time of his first recorded description, he was only 18 years old and 5 feet 6 inches in height; and September 20, 1779, fifteen months later, he is described as 19 years of age and 5 feet 7½ inches in height, showing a slow but steady growth in spite of the privations and hardships that he endured.

It is much to be regretted that so few incidents of his stirring and hazardous life have come down to us and that these are entirely without chronological order.

The shortness of the terms of service shows strikingly the ephemeral nature of the armies raised by the colonies for the defense of the Declared Independence. Without money and supplies to pay and feed the army, it could be held together but a brief time and then disbanded.



But evidently Josiah loved the service, for he kept "jinin'."

He was with Washington during the terrible winter at Valley Forge, and at that time was vaccinated for smallpox. Some of our finicky friends put up a dolorous 'howl' at being required to submit to the slight inconvenience caused by our modern vaccination. But in those days they were vaccinated from a real smallpox patient and had the actual disease, being first prepared for the ordeal by a course of dieting which reduced the suffering and danger to a minimum.

Several times he was taken prisoner, but always managed to escape. At one time he was confined on a hulk or prison ship in either Boston or New York harbor. At that time he and all the other prisoners were being slowly starved to death, although a bunch of hogs on board owned by the captain and steward of the ship were being finely fattened on food that should have been given to the prisoners. More than that, the bread that was served out to them was wormy and rotten. One day an undersized insignificant man came aboard and desired to look over the ship and especially to see the pen of fine hogs. He was treated with scant courtesy, but was allowed to look about. After assuring himself of the condition of things on board, he suddenly faced the captain and,





throwing off the shabby old coat he wore, revealed himself as an Admiral in command of the British fleet. He roundly denounced the captain and steward for their dishonesty and cruelty and ordered them both to be put under arrest and took them away with him. It seems that some inkling of the treatment of the prisoners had reached the ears of this brave and high-minded commander, and to make sure that the information was correct, he came to the hulks disguised. The captain of the hulk, after proper punishment, was allowed to return to his post, but the steward, who seems to have been the most to blame, was never sent back. The prisoners were ordered to slaughter the nicely fattened hogs as they needed them, and for some time fed high on fresh pork.

Another time when a prisoner with several other Americans, he was confined at a seaport town temporarily, the British intending to send them to Halifax soon for safe keeping. An American, who was really a patriot but pretended to be a loyal Tory, invited all the band of prisoners to a dinner. At the meal he reviled them for their disloyalty to their king, and while really treating them with the utmost kindness, pretended to lecture them severely. Then he turned the conversation upon boats and began to boast of what a fine boat he had, casually mentioning



the fact that it lay in the water a short distance from the house at which they were feasting.

“Why,” said he, “that boat is a splendid boat; it would be perfectly safe to go to Boston in that boat.” Now, Boston at that time was in the hands of Washington. Josiah’s quick wit took the intended hint. He had no desire to go to Halifax to endure indefinite imprisonment without hope of escape. Tipping a wink to his comrades, he made a bolt for liberty, followed by at least a part of his fellow prisoners. How the guard was disposed of, tradition does not state, but Josiah and some others got clear and, seizing the boat of their generous host, as he had intended they should, they made their way to Boston and their own army. It is really hard in relating an incident like this to be confined to the few known facts. It could be elaborated into a mighty interesting story; and if one knew the details it would doubtless be interesting enough without elaboration. Imagine the dangers and the hardships of the trip in that open boat without provisions or arms.

As shown by the record above quoted, in the Spring of 1782 Josiah enlisted as a marine in the State ship *Tartar*, which was, of course, really a privateer. Here again is a chance for boundless story telling, if one only knew the story or could



draw on his imagination, for the *Tartar* was true to her name and fought many fights and captured many prizes.

Only two authentic instances have come down to me and they are only the skeletons of stories that would delight the heart of Fenimore Cooper. Upon one occasion the *Tartar* encountered a well armed and strongly manned English vessel. Whether it was a small vessel of war or a strongly armed merchantman, I do not know. Our grandmother, Lucy Everett, nee Lucy Churchill, wife of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, told me the story and said that our hero, her father-in-law, told her the story himself, but either he did not tell her the character or name of the vessel or she failed to tell it to me; at any rate, the vessel was a strong one and after an exchange of cannon shots, it and the *Tartar* came into collision. They quickly grappled and a hand-to-hand battle of the most dreadful kind ensued. Our ancestor's personal acts in this scene of carnage he modestly failed to tell, but knowing his hot-blooded and adventurous nature, we may well believe that his pistol was as heated and his cutlass as bloody as any on those sanguinary ships. Said he, in telling grandmother of the fight, "So fierce was the fighting and so great the bloodshed that when the vessel rolled toward the side on which I stood,



the deck was so deep in human blood that it was over my shoes."

The men of the *Tartar* finally won, and sailed away with their bloody prize.

Another time the *Tartar* captured a prize of immense value and the amount of prize money distributed on the occasion must have been very large. My father has told me the story, as he had been told it when a boy by his grandfather, our hero himself. Said he, "You know that when there was prize money to be divided, it was always sifted through a ladder and that which went through was taken by the officers; that which stuck to the rounds was divided among the men. But, even so, when the disbursing officer came to me, my share was more than I could hold in my hands. I took off my hat and he filled it brimming full of Spanish mill dollars."

We can infer that if a simple private in the marines received a sum that must have amounted to several hundred dollars as his share, the total booty must have been immense.

What a pity the old gentleman has left no record of any kind excepting these brief anecdotes.

Of what interest would be the names of these and other prizes and a detailed account of the circumstances that led up to their capture.

Josiah Everett, the 2nd, after the close of the





Revolutionary War, at a date of which I have no record, married Rebecca Farrington and emigrated to the then unsettled State of Maine. He and his wife Rebecca became the parents of twelve children, namely: John, Josiah, William, Samuel, Francis, Andrew, Rebecca, Betsy, Polly, Jane, and two daughters who died when young and whose names I do not know. In his later years he became very infirm in body, but his mind remained bright and clear to the last. I am under the impression that he became very religious, for my mother, who was at the time of his death a girl of fifteen or sixteen years, has told me that when she was a child she attended a religious service to which the venerable old hero came. He arrived in some sort of a wheeled vehicle, and what so impressed the incident on mother's young mind was that he was so decrepit that the men of the congregation took off the wheels of the carriage to enable him to alight. Undoubtedly the grand old man was to them all an object of veneration, both because of his great age and the great service he had rendered his country. His wife, Rebecca, died June 5th, 1842, and he survived her about six years. I think, but am not sure, that after the death of his wife, he made his home with his second son, Josiah Everett, the 3rd, until the time of his death in 1848.



I wish to call the attention of the descendants of this old hero, of whom we are all justly proud, to the fact that he and his immediate descendants of whom I shall write, together with their wives, were extremely long-lived. He and his wife, I might also add, left to their posterity not only a noble name, but a tendency to longevity and strong vitality, that is to any race, a mighty boon.

I say to the later generations of Everetts, if you have not health, energy and long life, it is because you have abused the constitution which your ancestors bequeathed you.

#### THE CHILDREN OF JOSIAH EVERETT, THE 2ND.

I am not attempting to write a complete history of the Everett family, or even of the descendants of our Revolutionary ancestor, for it would involve much expense and months or even years of patient investigation. I am simply writing down what I know of the line of which I am a branch, and incidentally what I have authentically heard of those who are not of my line.

As before stated, Josiah the 2nd was the father of twelve children and I know little of any of them excepting Josiah the 3rd, my own grandfather, of whom I write fully in another chapter.

John Everett, the eldest son, I believe, lived



and died in Maine. My impression is that his life was rather an uneventful one and that he lived to be very old. I know absolutely nothing of his descendants.

Josiah was my grandfather, and the second son.

William, the third son, lived in Maine until quite an elderly man, but moved to Alamakee County, Iowa, about the year 1865 or 1866. I knew him well. He was a kindly and very religious old gentleman and often made excellent speeches at the religious meetings. At the time I knew him he was living with his second wife, whose name was Mary. Her maiden name I never knew. She was a dear old lady, an untiring worker. Uncle William, as I have always called him, (although he was my great-uncle), was in humble circumstances, financially, and Aunt Mary used to do spinning and weaving for the neighbors. She used to weave carpets and blankets for my mother and so faithfully and splendidly was her work done that I think there are still extant cotton and wool blankets that she wove for mother about fifty-five years ago. I used to go over there on errands for mother and liked to sit and watch her shuttle fly back and forth as she worked. Uncle William lived to be old, but I do not know the date of his death.



Should this little book ever come into the hands of any of his descendants, I would be glad to hear from them.

Samuel Everett, the fourth son, was a man of much ability and energy. He was a farmer and a thrifty and enterprising one. While yet a comparatively young man, he left the hard old State of Maine and moved to the then new State of Wisconsin. Just when this move was made I do not know, but as he was well established as a prosperous farmer in 1851, he must have settled in his new home some time prior to that date. He was a most excellent man and enjoyed the respect of all who knew him. He made a mistake by marrying his own first cousin, a hazardous thing to do. His wife was an excellent woman, but she suffered most grievously, as did Uncle Samuel, on account of their joint mistake in marrying a blood relative. Their relations as husband and wife were pleasant, but their children were not of strong constitutions. While a large family was born to them, all their children died in infancy or childhood except three. Lucy, a daughter, grew up and married her cousin, Josiah Everett, the 4th, of whom more hereafter. But she was never strong and died before she was twenty-five years of age, leaving one child, Flora, who was brought up by her grandparents and





who married Edward P. Griffin. Samuel, Jr., was a man of fair constitution and lived to some sixty years. He died, leaving no sons, but he had two daughters, of whom I have lost track.

John, the other son, who survived to manhood, was a cripple, but a man of fine ability. He acquired an excellent education, studied medicine and became a physician of high standing. Of his posterity I know nothing.

Francis, the fifth son of Josiah, the 2nd, was a bold, hardy man, possessing much of the courage and spirit that made his father a fine soldier. He was a great hunter, ranging the great forests of Maine in search of big game. Although over military age when the Civil War broke out, his splendid health enabled him to pass for less than his true age and he entered the army and was killed. I wish I knew more of him, for he was a gallant man and his life would be exceedingly interesting. Of his posterity I shall speak later, for one of his sons fell in the front rank of the charging Union army at the battle of Nashville, with a rebel bullet through his brain.

### JOSIAH EVERETT, THE THIRD.

Josiah Everett, the 3rd, was the second son of Josiah Everett, the 2nd, the military hero, and



his wife Rebecca, nee Farrington. Josiah the 3rd was born May 23, 1797, in New Portland, Somerset County, Maine. He grew up in the country on a farm. The State of Maine was at that time a new country and his opportunities for education were most meagre. On December 25, Christmas day, he married Lucy Churchill, with whom he lived happily until his death in 1875, at the age of 78 years. She survived for 18 years, dying at the extreme age of 96 years. She was born February 2, 1801, and died in 1896.

This Josiah Everett, my grandfather, whom I well remember, possessed the military spirit that was so conspicuous in his father, the Revolutionary hero, although he never had the opportunity to engage in actual warfare. Born long after the close of the Revolution, he was too young to take part in the War of 1812, and when the great Civil War came he was more than sixty years of age, and, on account of rheumatism, was compelled to use crutches. He regretted most keenly that this was so, but used the training of his younger years to drill the young men of the neighborhood. I have, as a boy of five or six years, watched the patriotic old man hobbling about on crutches and giving words of command to the young militia-men as they marched and drilled under his keen





JOSIAH EVERETT 3RD



old eyes. I remember hearing him say, "If the Government will give me a commission, I can ride a horse and lead a regiment yet."

Born and raised in the hard life of a State of Maine farm, at a period when opportunities for education were most scanty, he in some way picked up enough of the elementary branches to enable him to do business properly, and this, with his strong common sense, kindly and generous nature, his intense devotion to his ideals of right, made him a leader in his community. His energy and industry made him well-to-do for that community and time.

His principal business was farming, but like the majority of the more enterprising of the State of Maine farmers of that period, he at various times carried on what might be called "side lines."

During the long, severe New England winters, when there was nothing to do on the farm, most of these hardy and industrious men attempted to produce something that would bring a little cash when sold; for the farm products at that time and place did not bring in much ready money and were largely consumed at home.

Maine was practically altogether a land of forests, and the men naturally turned to the industry of getting out forest products, when the fierce





Northern winter prevented the labors of agriculture. Maine at that time was rapidly becoming a shipbuilding state. Her splendid forests and numerous fine harbors gave her great advantages for this industry, so long as ships were built of wood. Ship knees, obtained by digging out and sawing up the roots of great trees along with a portion of the trunk, producing curves of the proper shape for the ship's side, were possessed of immense strength. They were greatly in demand and brought good prices.

Hoop poles, to go to the West Indies, for making rum and molasses barrels, were also produced in large quantities.

Whether grandfather engaged in either of these industries, I do not know, but he did operate a small sawmill a part of the time for many years. Later, the manufacture of starch from potatoes attracted much attention. Maine produces immense crops of fine potatoes and it is probable that at that time there was not much of a market for potatoes. However, Josiah the 3rd, with his usual energy and enterprise, built a starch factory. But nature stepped in and ruined the enterprise, for potato rot attacked the crop and it was impossible to secure the raw material at a price that would enable the manufacturer of starch to live at that business. Grandfather was consequently



obliged to abandon his most ambitious attempt at a manufacturing life. He suffered a very heavy loss. His sons, Josiah Everett, the 4th, Andrew and Franklin, as well as his daughter Lucy, had moved to the Middle West (Wisconsin and Iowa) about 1855 and he followed them. First he went to Wisconsin, where he remained but a short time, then to Portland Prairie, Alameda County, Iowa. His brother, Samuel Everett, and his son, Josiah, were at that time living at or near Hustaceford, Wisconsin, and there grandfather sojourned for a few months. He was always a tremendous worker, and while in Wisconsin he took up some very laborious work. I have forgotten what it was, but think it was hewing square timbers. At any rate, he overheated and over-worked himself. This brought on an attack of rheumatism, from which he never fully recovered. One of his limbs was drawn up at the knee and he never could straighten it. He walked on crutches for the remainder of his life. He was at that time only about 58 years of age and was strong and vigorous except for this affliction.

But I am going ahead too fast and must return to his younger days. Grandfather was intensely patriotic and public-spirited and took an active part in civic affairs. Had it not been that he was



exceedingly diffident he might have filled public positions of importance, for he was able, quick-witted and popular. But his shyness before a crowd was so great that he was utterly unable to speak in public, and at that period oratory was much more highly valued than it is at this time. As a leader of local politics, it often became his duty to introduce public speakers, yet it was always difficult for him to face an audience for the brief time necessary for doing so. In private argument he was keen, incisive, lucid and convincing. His wit was quick and amusing and, at times, brutally crushing. In those days the corner grocery store was the place where the great problems before the growing nation were discussed, thought out and, at times, fought out. The corner grocery store was in those days what might be called the progenitor of the modern saloon, which we are now struggling to eliminate. But the grocery was by no means the place of evil that the saloon has become. Liquor was sold as freely as molasses; in fact, they both had the same origin, namely, the sugar cane of Jamaica, for the liquor was usually Jamaica rum. It was exceedingly cheap and at many groceries it was the custom to treat each customer who made a purchase to a "dram" of rum. It was also customary for the grocer, when serving the rum, to break



an egg in it, on the principle, I suppose, of the saloon free lunch. I have heard my father tell a true story of an incident that occurred in their old corner grocery when he was a boy and which greatly amused a group of loafers who witnessed it. Money was scarce in those days and much of the trade was by barter. A man came into the grocery with an egg in his hand and said to the grocer, "I want to trade this egg for a darning needle." "All right," said the grocer, and took the egg and handed over the darning needle. "But," said the customer, "ain't ye goin' t' give me my dram?" "Oh, yes," said the grocer, and he broke the egg into the glass of rum. The customer drank his dram and departed with his darning needle, his dram and his egg.

This, too, is much like the modern saloon, where the proprietor often finds himself in the position of setting out a ten-cent lunch to a five-cent customer. I am digressing much from a family history, but as nobody is to be asked to pay for this book and no one will be obliged to read it, I am going to make it to suit myself, as it probably will not suit anybody else.

But to return to my subject. As before stated, grandfather was active in local politics. He was by birth and training an ardent Whig and was one of the first so-called Abolitionists. He threw





himself heart and soul into the cause of freeing the slaves. I often think that in the mind of grandfather, and to some extent in that of my father, was the belief that the blacker the slave and the more degrading his bondage, the whiter his soul. While on the other hand, the slave owner, no matter how kindly or humane, was to them blacker than the devils in hell. It is necessary for reformers to be extremists, and grandfather was, in his little field, the same kind of a leader as were Owen Lovejoy and old Ossawatimée John Brown in their larger way. All were fearless and ready, if need be, to die for the cause. A few Abolitionists in and about New Portland were greatly outnumbered by rabid pro-slavery men, strong Democrats. At the grocery many and hot were the impromptu debates, and there Josiah shone. Could he have forgotten himself before an audience as he did in those fiery neighborhood arguments, he might have rivaled his famous cousin, Edward Everett, as an orator. His merciless wit was not always of the delicate kind. In one of these grocery sessions, a rampant pro-slavery man concluded a fierce denunciation of Abolition by saying, "Why, if the niggers were freed I should expect to find a nigger in the company of my wife." Grandfather had listened good-naturedly to the furious outburst and his



eyes twinkled with delight at the wide opening that the speaker had left for his return thrust. "Well, Ike," he said, with lazy good-nature, "No one would blame her for wanting the company of a decent man once in her life." The crowd, though mostly against grandfather in belief, roared at the hit, and the victim, remembering that Josiah the 3rd was as strong as a bull, quick as a cat and afraid of no man, did not see fit to be insulted.

Josiah Everett the 3rd was all through the prime of his life a member of the state militia, and arose through long and faithful service to be a colonel. His commissions as colonel and major are still in existence. His old cocked hat and his colonel's sword, a beautiful weapon, which should now be the property of some Maine historical society, were the playthings of us grandchildren and were destroyed and lost.

He also served for many years as a local magistrate, but he was too modest to assert his claim to any lucrative office, and so his service to the public, both civil and military, were a financial loss rather than a profit.

He resided on Portland Prairie in Alamakee County, Iowa, from about 1856 until 1866 or 1867, and his postoffice was Dorchester. At this time or for a part of it, eleven families of Everetts lived in one neighborhood on Portland Prai-



rie. They were Josiah Everett, the 3rd, William Everett, the 3rd, his brother, Josiah Everett, the 4th, Andrew Everett, Franklin Everett, Benaiah Everett and Seth Everett sons of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, William Sylvester Everett, Francis Everett, Andrew Everett, the 2nd, and Charles Everett, these last four being sons of William Everett, the 3rd.

There also lived in the community the two daughters of Josiah the 3rd, Mrs. Orra Pease and Mrs. Lucy J. Harvey. But the West called, and the Everetts were pioneers by instinct. The pleasant family settlement began to break in 1866, and Josiah Everett, the 3rd, went with his son Seth to Tama County, Iowa, where he died and where he now lies buried. Of the family of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, his daughter, Mrs. Pease, continued to reside in Portland Prairie until, in extreme old age, she went to South Dakota, where she died. Mrs. Harvey went to California, where in the town of Whittier she now resides. Josiah the 4th, Andrew, Benaiah W. and Franklin all went to Lyons, Nebraska, in the years 1866, 1867 and 1868. There, after many prosperous years, Josiah the 4th died about 1886. Andrew died about 1913, and Franklin and Benaiah W. are still living at this date (1916). As above stated, Seth, the youngest child of Josiah Everett, the





MRS. JOSIAH EVERETT 3RD,  
NEE LUCY CHURCHILL.





3rd, went with his father to Tama County, Iowa, where he died in his early manhood at an age of not more than 25 years. He died of typhoid fever about 1869, leaving one son, who grew to manhood. I have lost all trace of him.

The children of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, and his wife, Lucy, Churchill, were:

Orro Everett, married Hosea Pease, born January 29, 1823.

Josiah Everett, 4th (died in infancy), born November 17, 1824.

Josiah Everett, 5th, born March 25, 1827.

Andrew Everett, born March 18, 1829.

Franklin Everett, born December 12, 1831.

Benjamin Everett (died in early childhood), born May 5, 1834.

Lucy Jane Everett, married Charles W. Harvey; born May 22, 1836.

Benaiah Everett, born August 22, 1839.

Seth Everett, born June 3, 1842.

I shall now take up briefly the descendants of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, in the order of their ages, and in so doing will perhaps repeat statements that appear in other parts of this little history.

#### ORRA EVERETT.

Orra Everett was the eldest child of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, and was born in New Portland,



Maine, as were all his children. She married Hosea Pease while still in Maine, but in about 1855 or 1856 they moved to Portland Prairie, Minnesota, Caledonia being the county seat, and there they resided until the death of Mr. Pease, the date of which I do not know. After his death, Aunt Orra went to South Dakota, where she died. Her children were Charles, Esther, Orra A. and Lucy. Charles married his second cousin, Ellen Everett, eldest daughter of Francis Everett, who was the son of William Everett, the 2nd, as before described. Ellen was related to the writer on her mother's side, her mother being Sarah Spencer, a sister of my mother, so that she was first cousin to me on her mother's side and second cousin on her father's side. Charles Pease and his wife, Ellen, reared a large family and I think that the rule that the marriage of cousins is fatal to the health and strength of their children did not hold good in their case, as I used to hear good reports of these children.

Esther Pease married Frank Healy, one of the best men I ever knew. They lived on Portland Prairie for many years and then went to Lake County, South Dakota, where they both passed away a few years since.

Orra A., while yet single, went to South Da-





JOSIAH EVERETT 4TH



kota and married there, but I never knew her husband.

Lucy died, unmarried, while yet young.

#### JOSIAH EVERETT 4TH.

Josiah Everett, the 4th, was really Josiah Everett, the 5th, for there had been a brother before him named Josiah, but he died in infancy and the same name was given to the next born. As he had no history, I have left him out of the count.

I have already given a pretty full account of Uncle Josiah, and will only say here that he was a man of most generous and liberal character, full of the milk of human kindness. His children were Flora, whom we have mentioned before as being the child of his first wife and who married Edward P. Griffin; Eugene, who now lives in Lyons, Nebraska; Edgar, whose residence is unknown to me; Sumner, who died several years since in Kansas; Warren, now living in Lyons, Nebraska; Albert, who was killed by the caving in of a cellar on which he was at work; and Elmer, who went to Colorado some years since.

#### ANDREW EVERETT.

Andrew Everett was one of those men whom everybody likes to have for a neighbor. He was





kindly, a great worker and attended to his own affairs. He was a money-making farmer and became wealthy as farmers go. He left his birth-place in New Portland Maine, when a mere boy of eighteen or nineteen years, and in company with William Sylvester Everett, his cousin, went to the pineries of Wisconsin. There he worked in sawmills and in making shingles. At that time, shingles were not sawn as they are now, but were made by hand, and he became very expert and rapid in making them. I think he put in two or three years there in the woods, dividing his time between sawmilling and shingle making. I believe also that at times he went out of the woods for short periods and worked for the farmers. He was very quiet and gentlemanly at all times, but had a high temper and tremendous courage and determination when aroused. At one time he worked faithfully for a mill man and had quite a sum due him. All the mill owners were more or less short of money and slow in paying, but this one was a little worse than the average. Finally some creditors came and were going to take possession of the lumber that Uncle Andrew's labor had helped to produce and leave him unpaid. Then came to the surface the spirit of his grandfather, the Revolutionary hero. He got his rifle and said to the people who were about to take





MRS. JOSIAH EVERETT 4TH, NEE CARLETON



possession: "If you attempt to take this lumber without paying me for my work, some one will get hurt." He was a mere boy, but they saw he was in deadly earnest and they paid him off. Another anecdote will further illustrate his character. He was working in haying for a well-to-do farmer, who was exceedingly parsimonious. Now, in those days haying was all done by human labor. The grass was all mown with scythes and raked with hand rakes. It was the hardest kind of work. The men who toiled in the blazing summer sun bathed in perspiration for ten or eleven hours per day, expended a vast amount of energy if they were good and faithful workers, and Uncle Andrew was one of the best. Men of that kind, doing such work as this, if they stand up to it, must have plenty of good nourishing food. When the men were called in to their dinner on the first day that Uncle Ahn, as we always called him, worked for this man, the table was spread with a few thin slices of bread and a little butter, without meat or any of the heavy nourishing foods with which most farmers load their tables during the season of heavy labor. The most conspicuous dish on this particular table was a lot of lettuce and other garden relishes, excellent in themselves, but about as good as so much hay to the man whose system has been exhausted by swinging a



scythe for six hours in the hot sun. Uncle Ahn glanced over the table and then quietly remarked, "I didn't come to Wisconsin to eat grass." He then, just as quietly, left the place.

About the year 1850 he and William Sylvester Everett went to Portland Prairie, Alamakee County, Iowa, where they were the first members of that Everett colony hereinbefore described.

While in Wisconsin, however, he met and married Sarah Peck. Aunt Sarah was a worthy wife of a worthy husband and the marriage was the nearest to a perfect one that I have ever seen. Most of my life was spent in intimate friendship with the family, and it was always a great treat to me to be allowed to go to Uncle Ahn's. I was there a great deal in my boyhood days and I never heard an unpleasant word between this model couple. They lived together, I think, more than sixty years. Their children were Frank Marion, born about 1851; Sarah Isabel, born about 1854; Andrew Irving, born about 1858; Arthur W., born about 1863, and Theresa, born about 1868. With the exception of Frank, all of these children are now living and I intend to send each of them a copy of this book with my love, and if I have misstated the ages of any of them, they cannot scalp me, for like most of the male Everetts, I am as bald as a door knob. I







ANDREW EVERETT AND WIFE, NEE PECK



will tell them more about themselves pretty soon, but I have not finished about Uncle Ahn yet. He was a splendid horseman and dearly loved a good horse. When I was a small boy and we joined farms with him on Portland Prairie, he kept a fine Morgan stallion, sometimes two of them, and he had some good brood mares of the same stock. One of these mares, which he named Nanse, was the mother of a larger number of fine Morgan colts than any other mare that I ever knew. Every one of her foals was a good one and under Uncle Ahn's good management and careful training, each young horse grew up to be kind and docile, true as steel, and yet full of that zeal and fire that made the Morgan strain famous.

Uncle Ahn was the soul of honor and would not sell any man a horse that was not right without telling the purchaser of the fault. The result was that while he held his horses high, he never lacked purchasers. His reputation and the reputation of his horses sold them at any price he asked. And they were really worth the prices.

In the Spring of 1867, I think in May, Uncle Ahn and family left Portland Prairie and followed Uncle Josiah to Burt County, Nebraska. I was a boy eleven years old, but I distinctly remember the morning they started, for I went to see them off. They traveled by "prairie schooner,"



driving their livestock. When I got down there that morning everything was in an uproar. They were just getting the cattle and the colts started out on the road. Frank, then a boy of sixteen or seventeen, wild with the excitement of the occasion, was mounted on a fiery young Morgan horse, resplendent in brand new saddle and housings, and was dashing about cracking a huge blacksnake whip and shouting at the cattle. How I admired and envied him, with the small boy's worship of the big boy. Frank was a good rider and it was fine to see him sitting his horse so firmly, as it leaped about and occasionally stood on its hind legs and pawed the air.

I want to say something here about Frank Marion Everett. He was one of the best of boys and young men, and though he was cut off before he had a chance to enter fairly upon the career of a man, yet he lived long enough to demonstrate that his character was one that the later generations of our family may well emulate. He was honest to the core. He was kindly and pleasant to all. He was a tireless worker and the most loyal and unselfish friend I ever knew. I was almost five years younger than he and very small for my age, but it happened that there was no other boy in the neighborhood of Frank's age and he made me his chum.



Frank was a little slower in his mental development than his age would indicate, so that, notwithstanding the difference between our size and age, we were very companionable. We were usually in the same classes at school, and were always together whenever it was possible. Frank did not do, as most big boys and girls do, abandon the young chum when a boy of his own age came along. Often when some boy of his own age would come to visit him and they would plan some boyish excursion, Frank would say, "Let's go over to Montie," and I would be taken along. Then, too, he was always my champion. I think I must have been a mean little cub with a fiery temper, for I often got in trouble at school with bigger boys than myself. When I began to get the worst of it in many of my school brawls, I would yell "Frank!" and he would come bounding to my rescue. I loved him well, and it was a great grief to me when he passed to the beyond. Our family followed Uncle Ahn's to Nebraska in 1868 and Frank and I resumed our friendship.

In the Fall of 1872 Frank, his sister Isabel and I went to Lincoln, Nebraska, and entered the Nebraska State University. It has become a great institution, but it was very small then. Lincoln was a new and growing town, called into being by the fiat of the Nebraska Legislature.





There was no valid reason for locating it at that place, instead of any other place. Father and Uncle Ahn, anxious to educate their children, went to Lincoln, bought a lot and built a comfortable house, in which we were to live. We were to keep house, boarding ourselves. We started bravely, but were all desperately homesick. As I look back on the few months we stayed there, I think we all worked excessively hard and learned nothing. I know, for myself, that I was entirely obsessed with the desire to go home to such an extent that I was at all times in a kind of a daze. Our instructors must have considered me very stupid. Typhoid fever broke out in the town. One day Isabel was taken sick and in a few days was delirious. We telegraphed home for help and two or three days later I was taken sick, but was not delirious. Frank, poor fellow, did all he could for both of us, and kind neighbors who were utter strangers came to our relief. Isabel, in her delirium, was so violent that she at times had to be restrained by force from leaving her bed and rushing out into the streets. One day she sprang to a window which was open for air and was about to climb through it, when she was seized by a kind neighbor who was watching with us and forced back into her bed. The poor girl was highly indignant and told the lady that



she heard Artie, her little brother, calling to her and must go to him. And when forced back into her bed, she said in accents of deepest scorn, "I hope when I am dead you won't put me into a box two feet square." Poor girl, her sufferings were terrible. But soon Father, Uncle Ahn and Aunt Sarah all came, and good nursing and the comfort of their presence soon put us on the road to recovery. As soon as they arrived they sent poor exhausted Frank home to rest, but he, too, had become infected with the terrible disease and had a run of fever after getting home. As soon as Isabel and I were fairly on the road to recovery, but before we were able to stand, we were put in a covered wagon and taken to the homes for which we longed. And so ended our university course.

A year or so later Frank went in swimming in the Logan Creek with a friend. He started to swim across the stream, which was in flood. His friend, standing on the bank, heard him cry out and saw him throw up his hands and go down. He never rose again in life.

Isabel, Andrew's second child, already referred to, was a girl of great energy and ability. After our return from Lincoln, she began teaching school and was a successful and popular teacher. However, at that time on the frontier attractive



young women were too scarce and bachelor homesteaders too numerous for a lady teacher to stay long at the work. At this time I remember my mother and myself joking Libbie Hart, a young lady who was living with us, about her matrimonial prospects, and we counted up twenty-three marriageable young men in the community, as against two marriageable young women. So Belle, as we always called her, gave up her school and married Benjamin S. Rusco, a splendid young man who, after faithful and efficient service in the war of the rebellion, had taken a homestead near Uncle Ahn's. They have lived long together, have amassed a comfortable fortune and have reared and educated a family of boys, each and every one of whom have "made good."

Andrew Irving Everett is a very successful man, but he and I have for many years lived so far apart that I can only say that he stands high in the estimation of the community where he lives.

Arthur W. Everett, third son of Andrew Everett, is a man of very unusual ability. He is not a money-maker, but in other respects he is brilliant. As a boy in school he always excelled. He is a mechanical genius and in the handling of machinery seems to possess by intuition a skill that most people acquire only by years of experience. But his greatest talent is as a writer. For



years he has been employed by a great Japanese corporation as an engineer. For months at a time he is buried in the interior of Japan and neither sees a white face nor hears an English word. His letters from that country rival the works of the great traveler and writer, Carpenter. I hear that he is preparing to write a book on Japan. I predict for the work a great success.

Theresa Everett, youngest child of Andrew Everett, while yet very young, married James Sayles Paine. They have succeeded well in life and have reared a family of children of whom any parents would have a right to be proud.

#### FRANKLIN EVERETT.

Franklin Everett, fourth child of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, my father, I write much of, because I know much of his life and I want my children and their descendants to remember him.

He has lived long and is still living. He has done much and is still doing. He is a father of whom I am proud and I feel I have a right to be so. Born on the old rocky farm on which Josiah the 3rd lived so long, in New Portland, Maine, he was brought up on the hardest kind of hard work. When he was a boy and a young man, his father was still clearing land and building





stone walls on the old place and the boys all worked at it. I have heard him say that a hundred times a day in the work of removing stones and logs he would lift so hard that he would see stars as though he had been struck on the head. Such work either kills a boy or develops him into a man of great strength, and all of grandfather's sons were men of great strength. Andrew and Franklin were so nearly of an age that they were very equally matched. Andrew, or as I always like to call him, Uncle Ahn, was exceedingly quick and active and a great wrestler. I have heard father say that as they grew up to be men he could not stand up, even for a minute, before Uncle Ahn in a "square holt" collar and elbow wrestle. At a rough and tumble catch-as-catch-can scuffle they were equally matched, and in a dead lift he was slightly stronger than Ahn. As before stated, Andrew left home while yet very young and went to the Wisconsin pineries, and a year or two later Franklin joined him there.

September 1, 1851, Franklin Everett, then not quite twenty years of age, left the old New Portland home and traveled by stage to Hollowell, Maine, thence by steamer to Boston, thence by a newly constructed railroad to Albany, N. Y. At that time there was but one car in a passenger train, and that very little different from a stage



coach. At Albany he crossed the river on a ferry and again traveled by rail to Buffalo. There he took a steamer around through the Great Lakes to Milwaukee. From there he walked to Hustaceford, where lived his uncle, Samuel Everett, above mentioned. After a short visit at his uncle's, he went on into the pinery, as the great woods of Wisconsin were then called. He walked all the way there. The distance was long, but he was active and had no mind to spend money for any means of conveyance. He crossed the Wisconsin River in a rowboat and finally joined Andrew and William Sylvester Everett in the woods, where they had already worked winters for some three years. The method was to make rafts of timber and lumber and pile shingles on the raft and run the whole down the river to the Mississippi and down that to some river town and sell the whole thing. Ahn and Bill were experts at the work, and Franklin could not make shingles as fast as they, so he sat up nights and made enough shingles to keep even with them in quantity. All the winter of 1851-52, he with Ahn and Bill made shingles by hand, for shingle mills and sawn shingles were unknown.

Government timber was considered worthless at that time and any one was at liberty to cut as much as he pleased. All the shingles a man could



make out of it were his own, representing nothing but his own labor. So the young men all worked hard and made lots of shingles.

But when Spring came, no one had any lumber to drive, so that there were no rafts on which shingles could be shipped. They were forced to leave their Winter's cut of shingles in the woods until such time as rafts should be moving. He, however, went with Ahn and Bill to Rock Island, Ill. He took a steamer back to Galena, from which point he walked back to the pinery. He had expected that some rafts would be ready to go down the river on the "June rise," but there was no June rise; and he walked back to Uncle Sam's place at Hustaceford, Dodge County, Wisconsin.

Through the remainder of the Summer of 1852 he worked for Uncle Sam for \$15.00 per month and mowed with a scythe all the hay for a hundred head of cattle. In the Fall he went back to the pinery and put in the winter making shingles and hewing square timbers. Much of the time he lived there all alone and his food was flour stirred up in water with a little salt and cooked as pancakes. In spite of hard work and hard fare, he was well and became heavier than he ever had been. In the Spring he made his hewed timbers up into rafts, on which he piled all his



shingles and floated it down to the Mississippi to Hannibal, Mo., selling shingles as he could to the people in the towns along the river. At Hannibal he sold his raft in the Spring of 1853. While there he got his first personal glimpse of the slavery he had always hated from hearsay, for there he heard one man inquiring of another about a runaway "nigger." He received about \$400 in gold for his timbers and shingles, which was quite a good deal of money in those times. There was no opportunity to get a bank draft as one would do now, and he found his little fortune quite a burden, as he walked so much of the way on his return. He again took a steamer as far as Galena, from which point he walked to Portland Prairie, Alamakee County, Iowa, where Ahn and Bill had settled on Government land. They lacked a part of the money to settle with the Government for the land and he loaned them what they needed, thus beginning a business which he has largely kept up all his life—money lending. He then walked back to Lansing, Iowa, on the Mississippi, where he hailed a lumber raft and rode to Prairie du Chiene. From there he walked to Milwaukee and took a steerage passage on a steamer to Buffalo. He was saving every cent he could in order to get started and he lived on one meal a day on this trip. He observed





all along great improvements in transportation during the two years he had been away. He reached Boston July 4, 1853, and on that evening saw the first fireworks he had ever seen. During his absence a railroad had been built from Boston to Biddeford, Maine, and he traveled over it to that point. At that time his sister Lucy was working in a cotton factory and she met him at Biddeford. He and Aunt Lucy traveled by stage from that place to Farmington. There he left her and walked to the old home, where he took grandfather's team and went back for her.

Franklin remained in the old home during the remainder of July, helping his father and uncle in haying, and August 14, 1853, he was united in marriage to Clara Spencer, daughter of James and Martha Spencer, to whom he had been engaged for some time. A week later, August 21, 1853, he and his wife started for the West to make a home in the new country. His father took the young couple to Hollowell, Maine. From there they went to Boston by boat, Boston to Buffalo by railroad, Detroit by steamer, railroad again to Chicago, Chicago to Milwaukee by steamer. By this time a new railroad had been built from Milwaukee to Watertown, Wis. At Watertown they hired a man with a spring wagon



to take them and their little trunk to Juneau. It was five miles from Juneau to Uncle Sam's place, and Clara insisted on walking with her husband that distance, and so they arrived safely at their first stopping place in the great West. At Uncle Sam's, Franklin worked through the Fall and Winter at 50 cents a day and his wife taught a little school in the chamber of Uncle Sam's house at 75 cents per week and worked mornings and evenings for her board. In the Spring of 1854 they bought a yoke of little stag oxen and the wheels for a two-wheel cart. These wheels I saw years afterward. They were made entirely of wood with felloes heavy enough so that steel tires were not needed. On these wheels Franklin built a frame and body for the cart. On March 10, 1854, Franklin and Clara Everett put all their earthly possessions into that little cart, yoked it to their little stags and started for Alamakee County, Iowa. They drove first to Prairie du Chesne, and it took them ten days to reach that point. They crossed the Mississippi at McGregor and went up through a pass in the Mississippi River bluffs across Clayton County, Iowa, following the dim wagon trails of that new and sparsely settled region over its broad prairies. On April 1, 1854, they reached the little cabin on Portland Prairie where Andrew Everett lived.



It is something of a coincidence that just fourteen years later on the same day of the month they landed at Burt County, Nebraska, where the greater part of their lives was destined to be spent. With his characteristic energy, Franklin at once went to work to build a log cabin. Although the land taken up by him was prairie, the country about was largely covered with fine forests of oak and hickory. He hewed small logs for the walls. The roof boards were split out of straight grained logs and were called "shakes." The shingles were made by hand out of oak. He got a few sawed boards from somewhere for the floor for a part of the cabin; for the remainder, the ground served. In this rude cabin, Franklin and Clara Everett lived happily for years, and in it were born the writer and his brother Walter. Franklin and his wife were frugal and intensely industrious. They prospered, and in about ten years the old log cabin was abandoned for a comfortable frame house. That house would now be considered a rough and cheap affair; but in that time and at that place it was considered the height of luxury, especially the little parlor, which they furnished with an old-fashioned hair-cloth set.

But the log house was always the place of interest to us boys, and for years we used it as a





MRS. CHARLES W. HARVEY, NEE LUCY J. EVERETT





play house. It was our fort, and many a hot fight had we defending it against hostile Indians, with which our imagination peopled the plum brush thicket which grew about the place.

When they first settled in the old log house, the country still abounded in game, and I have heard mother say that she had counted as many as forty deer running past the house in a single band.

As related in another chapter of this record, this home was sold in the Fall of 1867, and on March 13, 1868, Franklin and Clara Everett made the second great move of their lives.

The children of Franklin Everett and Clara Everett were:

Fremont Everett, born December 16, 1855.

Walter Everett, born April 12, 1857.

Edward Burton Everett, born January 13, 1865.

Clara Ethel Everett, born November 8, 1870.

All these are still living at this writing.

#### LUCY J. HARVEY, NEE EVERETT.

Lucy J. Everett was the fifth child and second daughter of Josiah Everett, the 3rd. She was and is, for she is still living, one of the most admirable women I have ever known. Her dig-



nified yet unassuming manner, her low and gentle voice, perfectly modulated and distinct, her fine figure and graceful carriage, her air of ease and confidence, free from the least hint of boldness, marked her at all times and places as one of nature's gentlewomen. On her mother's side she was a scion of the noble English house of Churchill, and had she been born of the direct line of the family, daughter of an earl or a duke, right gracefully would she have filled the place. But born the daughter of a poor New England farmer, who in her young days scrubbed, cooked, spun and wove and then worked in a cotton factory, she was none the less, and all unconsciously to herself, the finest product of our highest civilization, a pure-bred, high-class, Anglo Saxon lady, guided and directed by that acme of all moral forces, a New England conscience of the nineteenth century. She married Charles W. Harvey, a remarkable man, whose work and achievements in his long and busy life would make a most interesting volume. In their early married life they lived on a farm in the Everett settlement on Portland Prairie. Later they moved to Waterloo, Iowa. After living there for a few years they went to Los Angeles, then to Whittier, California, where Uncle Charles died and where Aunt Lucy still lives. Their chil-





BENAJAH W. EVERETT



dren were but two, both girls, and of these one died in infancy. The other, Emma L. Harvey, grew up a bright and highly popular girl, the very idol of her father and mother, and a great favorite with all who knew her. She married Frank Elder and became the mother of three children—Arlie, Dudley and Grace. All of them were very bright and Arlie possessed an ability that amounted to genius. But Providence, that sometimes seems to us poor mortals harsh and stern, had decreed that neither of these boys should live to fully develop the talents which they undoubtedly possessed. Arlie, while yet a mere youth in years, became night editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, one of the greatest papers of the Pacific Coast, and was murdered along with twenty other persons when the Labor Unions blew up the *Times* building, because the *Times* consistently opposed their unreasonable demands. Not very long after Arlie's death, an automobile in which Dudley was riding, together with Mr. George I. Ham, a noted Mexican banker, went through an open bridge and both men were killed.

#### BENAIAH W. EVERETT.

Benaiah W. Everett, sixth child and fourth son of Josiah Everett, is frequently referred to in





other parts of this book. He is a man of strongly marked individuality and very superior ability. While often concealing his real kindness of heart under an assumed gruffness, he always was one of the first to come forward when any of his neighbors were sick or in trouble. He had a dry and genial humor that I always enjoyed when in his company. I think he inherited in a great measure the spirit of his grandfather, the Revolutionary hero. His courage and fighting spirit is well illustrated by the incident of his putting to flight the followers of George W. Carver, which I relate elsewhere. He married Elisa Grout, a young woman of splendid intellect and as great culture as was then obtainable in our new Western country. She was my first teacher and, as I think, the first teacher that ever opened a school in the old Everett settlement on Portland Prairie. The children were all small and I suppose it was really more of a kindergarten than anything else. I can remember that when any of us little ones were sleepy, she would put a shawl or something of the kind under the head of the weary tot and put it to sleep.

That was easily done, for our seats were mere benches running around the walls of the school-house, and there was plenty of room for us to lie at full length. Anyway, we all loved Aunt





MRS. BENAJAH W. EVERETT, NEE GROUT



Elise, though she was just married to Uncle Ben and had not been our aunt long. As I remember, every child in the room was a niece or nephew of hers by marriage.

The children of Benaiah Everett and his wife Elise were John Everett, Enos Everett, Nellie Everett, May Everett, Ruth Everett and Edith Everett.

Enos left home when a young man, and I have met him but once in about thirty years. I know very little of him.

Nellie died many years ago in Denver, Colorado.

May, after being for a number of years a very successful teacher, married James M. Styles, a successful young merchant of Lyons, Nebraska. The death of Mr. Styles a few years since left her with several young children and a large business on her hands. She arose to the occasion grandly and so far as one can see is carrying on the business just as successfully as did her late husband.

Ruth was for years one of the best teachers ever employed in the schools of Burt County, and was finally employed in the Government school for Indians on the Omaha and Winnebago reservation. Here she met and married Captain Paul Beck, now famous as one of the most expert and daring aviators in the United States Army.



But Ruth is a genius. While employed on the reservation she seems to have imbibed the very spirit of Indian life; to have grasped the mode of thought and the viewpoint of the Aborigines, as it existed before it was vitiated by contact with the whites. Her book, "The Little Buffalo Robe," opens up to its readers an insight into the spiritual and thought life of the Indian and shows that he possesses an intellect and imagination far superior to that ordinarily ascribed to him. I understand she is at work upon another book and I believe her works will make her famous.

John studied law, and is now County Judge in South Dakota, with a very promising career before him.

Edith, the youngest, is happily married to a splendid young man and is entirely devoted to her husband and home. It seems to me that I may truthfully say of her, "She is a successful wife."

#### SETH EVERETT.

Seth Everett, the youngest child of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, came from Maine with his parents while a mere boy and lived with them on Portland Prairie until he was about twenty years of age. At that time he married Pattie Denison, for, like all the Everetts, he married very young.





Not long after his marriage came the breaking up of the Everett colony on Portland Prairie and he and his parents moved to Tama County, Iowa, where they bought land and settled. Seth was an energetic young fellow and prospered in his new home, but he was fated to be one of the few Everetts who have died young. He was taken with typhoid fever in 1868 or 1869 and soon passed to the beyond. He left one son, but I do not know where he is or whether he is living. Aunt Pattie afterward married Melvin Lovejoy, a cousin of her first husband. I have lost all trace of them.

I have brought all the descendants of Josiah Everett, the 3rd, down to the present generation and will leave the further history of the family to be written by some one who comes after me.

I incorporate with this history a description and account of the experiences of my own parents in their removal from Iowa to Nebraska and some of the incidents of pioneer life, which may give the coming generations a clearer idea of conditions in the days when Eastern Nebraska was being transformed from a desert into a garden.



## PART II





FRANKLIN EVERETT



## PART II.

### PIONEER DAYS OF THE EVERETTS AND THEIR FRIENDS.

I am writing these recollections for the benefit of the descendants of the people named therein, and especially for the use of the descendants of Franklin and Clara Everett, my father and mother.

Much of the matter contained therein will be of no interest to other people and will doubtless seem like a family history, which indeed it is. But so much of the experiences through which our people lived were common to thousands of pioneer families that they should interest the descendants of any of the old pioneers.

So in this year, A. D. 1914, I will set down such recollections of our early days in Burt County, Nebraska, as my memory retains, with no attempt at literary effect or even system.

Now that the men and women whose efforts changed Eastern Nebraska from a wilderness to a garden are so rapidly passing away, it seems fitting that some record of their struggles, hard-





ships and adventures should be handed down for future generations.

Soon, those of us who came with them as children will have passed to the beyond; then, lacking written records, the inspiration of those brave lives will be lost.

In the Summer of 1866, Josiah Everett, the fourth in direct succession of that name, left Dorchester, Alamakee County, Iowa, and, journeying across that state by team and "prairie schooner," arrived in Burt County, Nebraska, near where the village of Lyons now stands.

"Uncle Si," as everyone called him, was at that time in the prime of life, a handsome bearded man, powerfully built, full of dash and spirit. He had been much of a rover all his life, having gone to sea from the State of Main when a mere boy, and afterward visited the then unsettled State of Texas, where he remained but a short time.

Returning from Texas, he settled in the State of Wisconsin, which was at that time on the frontier. Soon, however, the breathing spaces of Wisconsin became too restricted by settlement to suit his wilderness nature and he moved to Iowa. That was the period when I first knew him. He remained there but a few years; then, hearing of the vast prairies and free lands of





MRS. FRANKLIN EVERETT, NEE SPENCER



Kansas and Nebraska, not yet admitted to statehood, he sold his farm and, loading his family into a covered wagon, started westward.

I have the impression that at the time he started he had no very definite destination in mind, but slowly they traveled westward, ever westward, and after many days, pitching their tents wherever night overtook them, they at last paused on the brow of a beautiful green hill about a mile northeast of the present village of Lyons.

There Uncle Josiah founded his last earthly home, and there, after many years of toil, he died, loved and esteemed by all who knew him.

I, as a small boy, saw him on the day before he started on the long journey from Iowa to Nebraska, and I shall never forget him as he looked that day. He was riding a spirited young horse and carried in his hand a long-barreled muzzle-loading rifle of the Old Kentucky pattern, and would have made a fitting companion for Kit Carson. He was taking leave of his mother, my grandmother, and I stood by and heard the conversation. There was no outward show of feeling, no kisses or embraces, for these hardy old pioneers deemed such things a display of weakness. As I recollect, the conversation ran something like this:



Grandmother—"Why do you want to go off way out West and git skelped by Injuns?"

Uncle Si—"Ain't a-goin' where there's no Injuns."

Grandmother—"Well, you'd better stay here; you're doin' well 'nuf."

Uncle Si—"Wahl, I guess I'll go, anyhow. Good-bye."

The next day he started, and he did not do as he said he would, avoid the Indians, for he settled within a few miles of two large reservations, the Omaha and Winnebago. But the Indians of these tribes were always his warm friends, and he never missed an opportunity to do them a kindness.

Poor grandmother, how little she thought that the new land to which he was going would be her home the last twenty years of her life and that the new farm he was about to acquire would be her resting place in death!

Josiah Everett was the first actual settler in what was afterward known as Everett Precinct. He was speedily followed by Gideon Fritts, M. H. Wilse, familiarly known as "Met," Peter McMullen, Thomas and Mell Center, R. S. and Jas. D. Hart.

Glowing reports of the beauty and fertility of the country speedily came back to us in the old





Iowa home, and in the Spring of 1867 Uncle Andrew and Uncle Benaiah W. Everett and their families followed Uncle Josiah's prairie schooner route, and took up land a mile or two west of Lyons.

At about that time, Franklin Everett, my father, Charles W. Harvey, who had married Lucy Everett, father's sister, and J. G. Coil, a tried and trusted friend of father, took a trip to Nebraska and took up land. How they went, I am not certain, but they did not go by team, and my impression is that they went from Lansing, Iowa, by steamboat to Clinton, from there by rail to the then terminal of the Chicago & Northwestern, and the rest of the way by stage to Omaha, and from Omaha to Uncle Si's place by livery team. Anyway, they were not gone from home very long, perhaps two weeks.

Coil took up the section of land adjoining Uncle Andrew's on the south, and situated about three miles southwest of Lyons, which land he owned and occupied until his death. He also took up a half section across the Logan, one mile east of the section on which he settled.

Harvey took up the land where Lyons is now situated, but never went there to live, and the land soon became the property of Waldo Lyon, who founded the town.



Father took up the old home place, Sec. 13, Tp. 20, R. 8, which he still owns. Also a half section one mile west across the Logan, which was afterward owned by William G. Waite and Henry Howrer, who had married sisters of my mother, and they both came there to live.

After a few years, Uncle William sold his farm and moved into Lyons, where he still lives. Uncle Henry owned his and lived upon it until the time of his death. The price of all that land at that time was \$1.25 per acre to the Government. By the purchase of what was known as college script, which could be obtained at fifty per cent of its face value and which the Government accepted at par in payment for land, the actual cost of these lands to the purchasers was sixty-two and one-half cents per acre. The land is now worth three times that many dollars per acre.

On March 13, 1868, our old Iowa home passed into other hands and on that day our family, consisting of Franklin Everett, Clara Everett, nee Spencer, father and mother; Fremont Everett, aged twelve; Walter, aged ten, and Edward Burton, aged three, started via prairie schooner route for Nebraska. Our only sister, Clara Ethel, now Mrs. W. S. Newmyer, was born years afterward in the new home.

The frost was just coming out of the ground



and the roads were bad. The first day we traveled only about fifteen miles and stayed that night with Uncle Oliver Waite, who had married another of mother's sisters, and lived at that time near the town of Hesper, in Winneshiek County, Iowa. He afterward sold out there and went to live with the rest of us in the new country, where he still lives. The roads were so heavy that father got Uncle Oliver, who, as he always did, owned a fine team, to go with us for a few days and help us with the loads.

We had two wagons, father driving one team and I the other. As I recollect the matter, Uncle Oliver put his horses on as a lead team through the hard places. How far he went with us I have forgotten, but I well recollect the feeling of loneliness that came over me the morning he swung himself onto one of his horses and, leading the other, rode away on the back track.

At the time of our removal from northeastern Iowa, that state as a whole was very new and undeveloped. The means of transportation were very scanty. The ribbon of country along the west bank of the Mississippi River was very well served by the excellent steamer that plied on that stream, for those were the palmy days of Mississippi steamboating, so much talked of in both history and fiction. But inland there were vast



areas reached by neither railroad or navigable stream. The roads were, of course, at that early period merely wagon trails over the prairies and through the forests without grading, and in many places without bridges over the streams, which had to be forded or crossed in rude flatboat ferries.

The Chicago & Northwestern and the Illinois Central Railroads were slowly creeping across the state, the former having reached the town of Booneville in Boone County.

However, we had more than a hundred miles to travel before we came near either line. We struggled along through the Spring mud without actually getting "stuck" until we reached the valley of the Wapsie River. This river is only a good-sized creek, but it flows through a flat, badly drained country in the midst of an extremely wide bottom land. However, it is said that once a school teacher in that country asked his school, "What is the biggest river in the world?" Up went a little fellow's hand. "Well, Johnnie, what is it?" "I know," said the boy; "it's the Wapsie. Father says it's ten miles wide and it hain't got no bottom." Whether or not it has a bottom we did not find out, but we started to find the bottom and went down in the mud to the wagon axle and stuck. All our efforts to pull the load





out failed and father went for help. He returned with a resident who looked about as down-hearted and discouraged as we felt. By the use of fence rails we pried the wagon up, and after many tribulations got across the Wapsie country.

At that time my grandfather, Josiah Everett, the 3rd, was living in Buckingham, in Tama County, Iowa. He and grandmother, Lucy Everett, with their youngest son Seth and his wife, nee Patty Denison, had moved there from the old home in Alamakee County some time after Uncle Si moved to Nebraska and before we made our move. At one time, about the year 1865, there were living in the neighborhood eleven families of the Everett tribe, all closely related. Within a very few years they all sold out and moved away, scattering, so that at this time I have entirely lost track of some of them and know not whether they are living or dead. Grandfather died in the Tama County home, as did also Uncle Seth. Grandmother, at the death of grandfather, moved to Lyons, where she died in 1896. Aunt Patty married a man by the name of Melvin Lovejoy, a cousin of her first husband, and removed to Oregon. I do not know where she is or whether she is still living.

But to resume my story. As grandfather's new place was nearly on our line of travel to



Nebraska, father planned to visit our relatives there. Just how long we were in covering the hundred and fifty miles, more or less, between Alamakee County and Tama County, I do not remember, but as I look back it seems to me it was nearly a week. The only thing I am sure of as to time in that trip is that we were nineteen days getting from our old home in Iowa to the new one in Nebraska.

Anyhow, we got to grandfather's and stopped a day or two there. Somewhere about half way between Alamakee County and Tama County, we camped for dinner by a fine farm and, getting into conversation with the owner, father learned that the place was for sale. He was greatly taken with the farm and came to mother and laid the matter before her, asking her what she thought of the idea of buying right there and saving the hardships of going on and opening up a new and unimproved piece of land. Mother told him to do as he thought best. Walter and I protested loudly, for our hearts were set on getting where Uncle Andrew was, for we were strongly attached to his children, our cousins, who, until his removal, had been our playmates. I do not have any idea that what we said had much weight, but I think father himself rather yearned for Uncle Andrew, with whom he had



always played as a boy and worked as a man, for they were nearly of an age, Andrew being slightly the older. Anyway, the farm was not bought and we moved on. I often have thought what a change it might have made in the lives of all our family had we stopped in northeastern Iowa instead of going to Nebraska.

We finally reached grandfather's place, and I think stayed two days with him and Uncle Seth. Father had tired of plodding through mud and drove from grandfather's place to Marshalltown, on the C. & N. W. R. R., and, chartering a freight car, loaded into it all our stuff, wagons and teams. It did not take us very long even on the newly built and very rough railroad to reach Boonesborough, the temporary terminus of the line. At that point we stopped for a day to repack our loads in the wagons. While we were there the town was rife with reports of robberies recently committed in the vicinity. The country was new and sparsely settled, in fact, scarcely settled at all. The advent of the railroad had brought in a number of desperate characters and the law was very laxly enforced. I, of course, knew nothing of this at the time, but I learned long afterward that father was very anxious. He carried several thousand dollars sewed up in his shirt and mother carried a large sum sewed into



her petticoat. Many a family has been slaughtered for far less. Father always did hate a gun or a pistol and never would carry firearms. However, he got a pitchfork out of the load and carried it alongside of him in the wagon seat, where he could grasp it quickly. He told me afterward that his plan was that if any one held him up to hold out his pocketbook to them and when they came to take it to run the robber through with the fork. It seems a very inadequate means of defense, but knowing father's strength, agility and cool courage, I think it quite probable that it would have proved successful. And as this is not a connected story, but merely a disconnected string of family and neighborhood incidents, I pause right here to tell of a happening that took place years before in the then new settlement on Portland Prairie, Alamakee County, Iowa.

The Everetts and others had settled on Government land and had complied with the then existing land law to procure title thereto. Among the settlers was a litigious old fellow named George Carver. He long ago passed to his reward, so we will not say anything about his character, but he commenced a system of litigation with the object of depriving the Everetts of their lands. A great feud was the result and the community was divided into two intensely hostile factions.





One day Carver, armed with a revolver and backed by several of his adherents, entered upon and attempted to take possession of a piece of land claimed by grandfather. Uncle Benaiah W. Everett, who was a husky boy of about nineteen or twenty, and who was still living at home with his father, together with my father, who lived close by, went into the field where the Carver party were to serve on Carver a written notice. Neither of them were armed. But Uncle Ben carried a little cherry stick which he used as a cane. Uncle Ben had the notice and when he attempted to hand it to Carver the latter pointed a revolver at Uncle Ben and threatened to kill him. Father, believing that Carver was merely bluffing, snatched the notice from Uncle Ben and pressed forward to present it to Carver. Instantly the revolver was turned upon father and fired. They were so close together that the pistol almost touched father, but in his excitement Carver missed, even at a short range, and the bullet passed through two folds of father's shirt (he was in shirt sleeves) directly over his heart and whistled harmlessly across the field. Carver had no chance to repeat the shot, for father leaped upon him like a tiger, and so great was his strength that the pistol was instantly wrenched from its frightened owner and so roughly that



the trigger guard badly lacerated the hand that held it.

Carver, expecting to be shot with his own weapon, dropped to his knees and begged for his life. Father has always declared that he did not feel any anger at all and had no idea of doing more than to disarm his antagonist. In the meantime, Uncle Ben, seeing some of Carver's followers advancing to his assistance, rushed among them with his little cherry stick and laid about him so vigorously that they were speedily routed. Carver got even by having them both arrested, charged with highway robbery. They had robbed him of his pistol.

I relate this incident to show that father, though armed with a pitchfork only, would have been a formidable antagonist for even a holdup man. However, we met no robbers and traversed the almost uninhabited country lying between Boonesborough and the Maple River without any adventure worthy of notice.

We reached the Maple River at a point near the present town of Castana and stopped over a day to visit William Sylvester Everett, a cousin of father's, who had left Alamakee County in company with Uncle Si, but had stopped in the rich Maple Valley instead of going on into Nebraska. He was prospering finely, although the



grasshoppers had paid him a short visit the Summer before our arrival. These "grasshoppers" were probably identical with the locusts of Bible days, and I shall have more to say of them later on in these memoirs. They had not "eaten out" Bill's crops as they did the crops of many settlers, but they had ruined his garden. "Yes," said he, "I had a fine bed of onions—good strong ones—and those hoppers would get their mouths full of onion and sit up on the fence and spit onion juice in each other's eyes and cry."

While there I took my first shot at a prairie chicken. They were very numerous at that time in the Maple Valley, and the next morning after our arrival Bill came to me and said, "Montie, there is a flock of prairie chickens out in the hog pen eating corn with the hogs. Don't you want to take a shot at them?" Did ever a boy of twelve willingly miss such an opportunity? I seized my old muzzle-loader and, pouring a big charge into it, followed Bill out across the road to the hog lot. We crawled cautiously up behind the rail fence, and got in easy range of the chickens, who were very busy filling their crops with Bill's corn. He carried an old Harper's Ferry musket, bored out for a shotgun, and he was a fine old hunter, cool and wary. We rested



our guns across the fence and had every opportunity to do great execution.

But I was struck with what I suppose was "buck fever"; anyhow those birds looked as big to me as turkeys. My gun wavered about, probably describing about a three-foot circle. At last I think I shut my eyes and pulled the trigger. The old gun kicked and reared and the chickens flew away. Bill did not fire, but stood grinning at my failure. "Why didn't you shoot?" said I. "Wahl," said he, "I was waitin' to get two on 'em in line. Didn't want to waste a shot on one bird." So ended my first prairie chicken hunt.

William Sylvester Everett's place on the Maple was twenty miles from the Missouri River. At the time of which I write, the Spring of 1868, there was quite a village on the Iowa side of the Missouri, opposite Decatur. It was, however, entirely of a transient nature and owed its existence to the body of fine timber that then extended for miles along the river, and to a sawmill owned by a Mr. Moore, who was cutting ties for the U. P. R. R., which was then pushing its way across the plains from Omaha and was paying high prices for anything that could be called a tie. The village was known as Tyeville, Tyetown or Slabtown, according to the whim of the speaker, and never even had a postoffice. The houses were





mere shacks, built of slabs, with chimneys of mud and sticks. This timber has long since been swallowed up by the "Old Muddy," which has a first mortgage on all land near its banks. But at that time it was fine; the large trees, many of them from four to six feet in diameter, were cottonwood. But there were also large quantities of ash and mulberry. Father afterward bought eighty acres of this timber and for many years spent his winters in getting saw logs, posts and wood across the river during the cold weather when the ice could be crossed by team. He would haul it over and take the logs to a sawmill owned by Stevens & Welch in Decatur, to be sawed into lumber, and the posts and wood were piled up to be hauled out to the Logan at convenient times. Many of the other early settlers practiced the same thing, especially Uncles Andrew and Ben-aiah, J. G. Coil, Uncles William G. and Oliver Waite and Joel S. Yeaton. All these men risked their lives at various times teaming on the ice, for the old Missouri is an especially treacherous stream, and solid ice at night would often be open water in the morning.

But father was especially venturesome, and for years I had the feeling that some day the river would get him. Always if he was delayed in his homecoming, which was very often, I would get



so worried and anxious that I could hardly stand it—waiting for him to come home. That I had a good reason for these feelings, the following instances will show:

The second winter that we lived there in the new home, Rev. Dr. J. M. Peebles, a pioneer preacher, supported by the Presbyterian board of missions, but mostly by his own work and faith, induced the settlers to undertake the erection of a church. How well the work was done is shown by the fact that after forty-four years the building still stands in a good state of preservation, and when I last visited Lyons was occupied by A. W. Hobson as a residence.

Father and Mr. Yeaton undertook to get the sills across the river before the ice went out, and they just did it and no more; for the river was already breaking up, as we called it, and they crossed with these sills the last crossing that was made, and with the horses on the run, the ice giving and slushing under the sled runners and the water from them and the horses' hoofs flying about them. When they were safely landed on the Nebraska side with their precious sills, for which they had risked their lives, an irreligious friend, who had watched them from the bank as they flew across, said, "If you had been crossing



anything but church lumber, you would all be under the ice now."

Another time he had a yet closer call, for he always went on the river earlier in the Winter and crossed later in the Spring than any one else. He was getting that one last load of wood or posts over one early Spring day. The road ice was stronger than any other place, for all Winter snow had drifted into the track, been tramped down and frozen into ice, reinforcing the natural ice. Father, as was usual when crossing was dangerous, was driving fast and running beside his sled. Suddenly his feet went into the river; but the road ice held the team and sled; he clung to the reins and the momentum of the team dragged him to safety. On another occasion, along in March, he went to Decatur, and as he wanted to see Mr. Moore, the sawmill man on the Iowa side, he had to cross the river. The ice was not yet broken up, but was so rotten that even father did not dare to venture on it with a team. He walked across, and while he was transacting his business the ice broke up. The ferry was not running. He must find some way to cross unless he went to Sioux City or Omaha or remained indefinitely in Tyeville. He hunted up an Indian who owned a dugout and tried to hire him to ferry over. But that noble redman had a wholesome



regard for his own safety; he knew that a dug-out is a mighty tricky thing, that the ice was running in great masses and chunks in a six-mile current; he knew that the water was mighty cold—in short, just at that particular moment he had a heap more sense than father had, who was obsessed with the idea of getting across that river, and could think of nothing else. He knew just as much about the management of a dugout as William Jennings Bryan knows about diplomacy, and was just as willing to try his hand at it; for when the Indian refused to be a candidate for the position at the bottom of the river, father seized the paddle and was going to start across alone. The Indian, either thinking he would not be outdone, or fearing the loss of his canoe, then reluctantly consented to go. They started across, avoiding the ice as best they could. As they neared the Nebraska shore, they encountered a jam of ice that the canoe could not penetrate. Father paid the Indian liberally, sprang out of the canoe and started for shore, leaping from icepan to icepan. For a time all went well, but at last he miscalculated and sprang upon a cake too small to bear him up. Down he went; the grim old stream that he had so long defied seemed about to seize him. But his courage, agility and presence of mind did not fail him. Gath-





ering all his strength, he threw himself upward and forward toward another cake, landing face downward across it with his legs in the water. Fortunately it was large enough to carry him and he succeeded in scrambling upon it and regaining his feet. Another rush and a few long leaps carried him ashore. He was wet to the waist, and as it turned cold that afternoon, he reached home with his lower limbs encased in an armor of ice. How many more narrow escapes he had I never knew, but I learned of these as they happened, and they served to keep me worried until in the course of years, changed conditions made it unnecessary for father to cross on the ice. If anybody reads this they will think I am a terribly long time getting from the Maple to Tyeville; but remember, I promised neither literature nor a connected story. And now we will go back again to where we belong, which is on the road between Onawa and Decatur, and we have just got to Tyetown. We got there just at night, and there we were to cross the river and enter the promised land. It was too late for us to be ferried over that night. The ferry consisted of a heavy scow or flatboat, owned and operated by Peter Coyle and John Lewis, brothers-in-law. As there was no hotel on that side of the river, Mrs. Coyle made us as comfortable as she could



in her little cabin. I afterward became well acquainted with these kind people and warm friends; and I shall never forget their kindness to us, entire strangers as we were. Mrs. Coyle had a large family of little children at the time, and they were poor and struggling to get along. But I have lived to see those little ones grow up to be a credit to their kind-hearted mother. Several of the boys have filled responsible positions. The only means of propelling and guiding the ferryboat was a set of long sweeps and it was so heavy and unmanageable that it was largely at the mercy of the wind and current. If the wind blew up the river so as to oppose the current they could man the long oars and work across the river nicely. But if wind and current joined forces against the ferrymen, it made crossing difficult; and it was their custom when that condition prevailed to tow the boat far up the river and then putting out they would work their way diagonally across. As I recollect it, the river at that point was about a half mile wide, and I think that they often drifted down a half mile in getting the half mile across. I do not remember the direction of the wind the morning that we started to ferry over, but I think it must have been unfavorable, for I recollect that they hitched a horse to the tow rope and, driving along



the bank, towed the unwieldy old scow as much as a half mile up the stream. Then they pushed off, and with much shouting and frantic pulling at the sweeps at last landed at a point far downstream. They could carry but a part of our stuff at a time, and it was a little past noon when we finally drove the teams up into Decatur.

At about 12:30 P. M. April 1, 1868, we took our first meal in Nebraska, at the hotel of "Clint" Smith in the town of Decatur. Clinton Smith was one of the well known pioneers of eastern Nebraska and lived in Decatur for many years. The rival hotel was kept by A. B. Fuller, who was also a pioneer, and even better known over the state than was Smith. These men and many others had been deeply disappointed that the U. P. and C. & N. W. Railroads had gone to Omaha instead of making Decatur their terminals, as was expected. Indeed, Decatur was and is the logical crossing of the Missouri for those great transcontinental lines. But their location was determined by political "pull," which for some reason Decatur lacked. But Decatur loomed large in the territorial history of the state, and many of its leading pioneers settled there. Among those whom I now recall were the two hotel men already mentioned; Captain Leaming, who at that time was a surveyor and locator; Robert and James



Ashley, brothers; Silas Brown, James Dun, the Griffins, Mr. Stevens and Mr. Welch, who were very active men and operated a sawmill and grist mill under the name of Stevens & Welch; Rev. John M. Peebles, the missionary before mentioned, and Dr. Whittier. There were many others that I cannot now recall. Immediately after dinner we started on the last stage of our journey. Had we been familiar with the country we should have reached Uncle Si's place by six o'clock at the latest, but we did not know the country and it was "April Fool Day." At that time there was but one house between Decatur and the Logan Valley. It stood on a high hill on what we have always known as the "Divide," was built by a Mr. Gould, and was visible for many miles on the then treeless prairie, and was known far and wide as the "Gould place."

We had sixteen miles to go over roads that were but dim wagon trail, with this one landmark to guide us. It was a day of raw spring wind, such as often prevails in Nebraska in early spring, and I well remember how comfortless and chilly it was. I drove a team and toward night I became so tired, sleepy and chilled that I could hardly hold the lines. To add to my discomfort I had for a few days been afflicted with a cankered sore mouth and had hardly been





able to eat. Luckily the team that I drove were both tired and gentle and required but little guidance, as they followed the lead team along the dim track.

Sunset came, darkness came, and found us on the illimitable prairie, tired to the point of exhaustion, chilled to the bone and very hungry. Just here I must pause to remind my children and grandchildren and any other friends who may read these recollections that the person who now views central and western Burt County can hardly realize what it was at the time of which I write. Now the trees and groves planted by those early pioneers have grown up, giving the country the appearance of a forest region. Roads and fences cut up the country and dwellings are everywhere. But on that dark chill night, forty-six years ago, no tree, no shrub, no plant larger than a prairie gum stock broke the monotony of the plain. Not a building, not a fence, not a road except the dim track, which in the thickening darkness we were following with great difficulty. Not a sound broke the stillness except the whistle of the chill wind among the dead grasses of the prairie and the creak and rumble of our heavily loaded wagons. Not a creature stirred, not a night bird cried—utter silence, dreary chill desolation, covered the land as with a pall. Lost on



the prairie, mother almost an invalid, three children, too young to be of any use, father the only guide and protector; but he cheered us as best he could and kept steadily on, saying that the dim track we were following must lead somewhere, although by this time he knew that it could not be leading us to Uncle Si's.

At last we detected the feeble glimmer of a light far away across the country and, following on, we came at last to the newly built shack of a homesteader. Father did not stop to knock or ask for accommodations, but sprang from the wagon and lifted poor, half-frozen, exhausted mother to the ground and exclaimed, "We'll stay here anyway—or fight!" But there was no fight, for the kindly occupants of the shanty had heard our wagons; the rude door was thrown hospitably wide and we were urged to enter and were made as comfortable as the conditions would permit. And the kindly cordiality of our welcome! My children, remember that boiled beans and the glad hand are better than roast turkey and the cold stare. I do not remember what they gave us to eat, but whatever it was, it was the best they had and given ungrudgingly. I think it was only bread and coffee; but we had shelter and a place to rest. I was so exhausted that before I had swallowed the few crumbs of bread



and coffee that my sore mouth allowed me to take I fell asleep and tumbled backward off the stool on which I sat (there were no chairs in the shack), hurting myself considerably.

Next morning, at the frugal breakfast, our host, who was one of those early Swedish pioneers who have made Oakland and vicinity the splendid community which it now is, in his broken English apologized for the humble fare. "Ve is poor yet," said he. Listen to the triumphant note of prophesy in that simple sentence. That word "yet" with which it closed was big with hope, pregnant with faith, tremendous with determination and sweet with love of the new home and the adopted land.

Our first day in the Logan Valley broke bright and clear, the sun shone warmly and the breeze blew gently. We learned that in the darkness we had missed the faint track that led to Uncle Si's and had driven several miles to the southward, and our stopping place was about half way between Oakland and Lyons. But neither of these towns was dreamed of for years after that time. Refreshed by our night's sleep, we cheerfully drove off to the northward after taking a grateful leave of our kind entertainers, and in an hour or two came in sight of Uncle Si's homestead with its cluster of little buildings. The



first person that we saw was Cousin Eugene S. Everett, then a boy of twelve, harrowing in wheat with a yoke of little stags. We had arrived. It was April 2, 1868.

Father's land, which was destined to be our home for many years, and which he still owns, is one mile north of Uncle Si's, and after dinner on the day of our arrival we went to see it. In going there we passed by the old M. H. Wilse homestead, now owned by W. S. Newmyer, where Met., as every one called him, was just getting settled in his little homestead shanty.

It is strange what little things will cling in the memory of a child. As we passed that place a little tableau was presented, which is as clear in my memory today as if it was forty-five years ago. A little homely scene, yet I can close my eyes and see it today as in a mirror. The little shack, outlined against its background of boundless prairie, and in front of it Met and Captain Leaming of Decatur were setting a post to carry a clothes line. The captain, who seemed to be visiting the Wilses, was holding the post in position and Met was tamping the earth about it. I never had seen Captain Leaming before, but I never forgot him afterward.

I wish I could picture to the young generation the great Logan Valley as it looked at that time.





The season was too early for any of the other grasses to show, but the bunch grass (now practically extinct in that country), the earliest of our grasses, was thrusting up its little spears and tinged the burnt-over country with green. In those days the prairie fires swept the country each Fall, burning the grass into its very roots, and purifying the whole country as nothing but fire can do. In the Spring, when the new sweet grass sprang up, there was an appearance and smell of utter cleanness, such as never can be found in an old settled country. There was nothing to break the view as far as the eye could reach, and to look at it and breathe the fresh breeze seemed to give one a sense of utter freedom, such as I have never experienced elsewhere. Later I used to like to get on a horse and gallop off across the country, where for uncounted miles there was not a fence or other obstruction except the streams that water the country so liberally.

The Logan Valley of those days was a beautiful country, yet was a new land and must yet be subdued to human uses. Many hardships must be endured and some real dangers met before it became the safe and comfortable dwelling place that it now is.

There was at no time any danger from the Indians, who were at all times friendly. The



Omahas and Winnebagos lived where they do now and still retained their tribal relations and held their lands in common. The Pawnees and Pencas, who have since been removed, lived some one or two hundred miles further south, and the various tribes frequently visited each other. On these occasions it was their custom to go in large parties, taking all their families, together with many ponies and dogs. At that time they had no wagons and all their tents and baggage was packed on patient little ponies, while on each side of the pack saddles would be fastened one end of the tent poles, while the other end dragged on the ground beside the trail. Sometimes a sort of hammock would be swung across these poles behind the pony that dragged, forming a place where children too young to walk were carried. They always traveled single file, the braves in the lead, mounted on the best ponies, and patient squaws trudged behind, leading the pack animals. On the occasion of these visits many presents were given and much gambling indulged in. Yet I firmly believe that on the whole the Indian of 1868 was a far better man physically and morally than his descendant of today. In addition to these visits, the Indians used to go each Spring and Fall down to the Republican and Blue Rivers to hunt Buffalo, which were still very plentiful along



these valleys. A deeply worn Indian trail passed up and down the valley before it was filled by the plow of the settler, and the natural grove north of Lyons, known as Fritt's grove, was always a favorite camping place for the tribes in their journeyings. On April 3rd, the day after our arrival at Uncle Si's, we crossed the Logan on a rude bridge which the settlers had put in somewhere in the grove of which I have spoken above, and went over to visit Uncle Benaiah and Uncle Andrew, whose homesteads lay together a mile or two west of where Lyons now stands. We received a warm welcome at both places and stayed at Uncle Andrew's for a day or two, while father could haul a load or two of cottonwood lumber from Decatur and put up a shack on his land.

That afternoon, while mother and I were sitting in Uncle Andrew's little house, visiting with Aunt Sarah, a shadow darkened the window. Aunt Sarah looked up and screamed, for there looking in at us stood a huge Pawnee brave. His face was gaily painted and he wore a pair of blue army pants. Excepting a light buffalo robe which he wore instead of a blanket, he was naked to the waist. However, his intentions were entirely friendly. He and several of his fellows were invited into the house and Uncle Andrew



was sent for. The Indians made it plain that they were hungry and wanted to buy "wamooski" (flour). Uncle Andrew's supply was scanty, but he spared them what he could and with the abounding kindness for which he was noted, showed his red guests every civility. But when it came time for them to depart a question arose as to how they should carry the flour which they had purchased. There was no extra sack. One only of the party wore a shirt, a calico shirt. He made signs that that garment would be the container for the flour and, quickly peeling it off, the flour was tied up therein. Uncle Andrew dryly remarked that the bread made from that flour would need no spice. Having made sure of his "wamooski," the big warrior remarked, "Heap Injun out here hungry." And sure enough, there were hundreds of Pawnees on their way to visit the Omahas. They were camping in Fritt's grove and short of food. Uncle Andrew was unable to supply the wants of so many, and doubtless the majority of them slept hungry that night. In two or three days father had thrown up a little shanty 14x18 feet and about 6 feet high at the eaves, into which we moved and in which we lived the entire Summer. In addition to our own family, we had with us much of the time two carpenters, who were putting us up a





permanent house — Uncle William Waite, who was arranging to live on his land a mile west, and Edward P. Griffin, a son-in-law of Uncle Si's, who was breaking prairie for us. So the little shack was always full to overflowing.

At the time of our arrival in the Logan Valley there were no wild animals more formidable than a Canada lynx or a prairie wolf, so there was no danger from that source. But one form of animal life was really a menace. Rattlesnakes were exceedingly numerous and much more neighborly and familiar than we relished. The first one that I saw was on the Logan bottom about half way between the foot of the hills and the creek. This was but a day or two after we had moved into the new shack. We had not had time to dig a well, and father, Walter and I were going to the creek with team, taking a barrel along to get water for house use. The new grass was just starting and on the closely burned-over ground there was no hiding place for the snakes, of which we saw large numbers. At first we saw only harmless varieties, garter snakes, blue racers and bull snakes.

It was a warm, sunshiny Spring day, and I suppose the reptiles were all out of their holes to enjoy the Spring sunshine after their long Winter hibernation. We paid no attention to



those harmless fellows, but left them to enjoy life in their own way, feeling that they would never do us any harm, much as we disliked their squirming looks. But when we saw a good-sized rattler lying at ease near the mouth of his hole, we woke up suddenly. We had driven close up to him before we saw him and stood in the wagon looking down on him. Disturbed by the passing of the horses and the rattle of the wagon, the disgusting reptile made a leisurely start for his burrow. We had no stick whip or other suitable thing with which to attack him. I have often killed rattlesnakes since that time with a dry gum stick, but so closely had the fire of the Fall before done its work at that particular place that not even a gum weed was left unburned. Walter and I saw no way to kill the creature, and so far as we were concerned it would have lived, possibly to have afterward sunk its fangs into the flesh of some poor victim. But father, with his usual quick decision and utter fearlessness, did not hesitate to act. Though shod only with low plow shoes that furnished but slight protection from the snake's fangs, he leaped from the wagon, alighting on the creature. We boys were frightened; of course, if father pinned down the creature's head, all was well; but if he only struck the back part of the body the head could easily writhe



around and strike father in the unprotected ankle. Fortunately father confined the head and almost instantly trampled the life out of the snake. It was a good lesson to us children, teaching courage and determination, and we always managed in the following years to kill all rattlesnakes that we discovered. I do not now recall ever letting one escape. And as most people followed that plan as far as possible, those venomous creatures, once so numerous, are nearly extinct. However, it has taken more than a generation to exterminate them, and many people have been bitten, a few have died from the bites, and thousands have had narrow escapes. Ed P. Griffin, the friend of whom I before spoke, and who with two yoke of oxen broke up the first forty-acre field on the place, told me that he found and killed twelve rattlesnakes while on that job, and it is not probable that he found one in ten of the number that was living on that forty acres. Undoubtedly, when we went onto old Sec. 13 there were several hundred rattlesnakes on the tract. When we moved into the shack that I described, we put a shoe or drygoods box by the door in front to use as a wash bench, and there we all stood to wash up when coming in from work. One day three-year-old baby Burt, trotting about the front door in his play, saw a rattler thrust his wicked head



out from under the box. He knew it was a snake and his baby prattle called to mother, "Mamma, 'nake unner box." Mother removed the box and found the snake comfortably domiciled within six inches of where the naked toes of us children lined up each time we washed our faces. Our deadly neighbor had so far shown no signs of hostility, and doubtless he was there searching for bugs and mice; but mother was so inhospitable as to instantly seize a hoe and decapitate him. In no other place were the snakes so much to be dreaded as in the harvest field. That was many years before the time of self-binders and the machines then used were self-rakes or "droppers," and they deposited the cut grain in loose bunches or "gavels" on the ground. Usually we had from three to five men following after and binding up the gavels deposited by the machine, each man binding a certain portion, which was called binding a station. It was considered rather humiliating to have the reaper catch you before your station was completed, so we always worked furiously. To rush to a gavel, seize a handful of grain, make a band, throw it around the bundle in arms, and to drop the whole in a panic when the ugly head of a rattler was thrust out, has been the unpleasant experience of many a sweating harvest hand. But I never knew any





one to be bitten in that way; for a snake must coil before he can strike and, squeezed up in a bundle of grain, he cannot coil.

As my mind goes back to those old times, it seems to me that nothing would tempt me now to take the chances that we then took daily, without giving a thought to the danger. We boys always went barefoot in the Summer time, thus adding immensely to the danger of being snake-bitten. Sumner Everett, Uncle Si's third son, was bitten on the big toe; but he had run barefoot for so long that the skin on his toe was almost as tough as leather, and as the snake was a little too far away for effective business, he barely punctured the skin and very little of the venom got into the blood. He was only a little boy, but he was courageous. I saw him a few hours after the bite. He sat humped up in a chair nursing his toe. His poor little chapped, scratched, bruised and blackened feet looked very much like toad's backs, and he said as he looked at them, "By gosh, I bet it killed that snake."

Henry Mowrer's eldest son Willard was bitten when a child so small that he thought the snake a stick and attempted to pick it up. He was badly bitten on the hand, and though his life was saved, I think the hand was to some extent permanently crippled. Snake bites from the massa-



sauger or prairie rattlesnake are seldom fatal. George Mann, a brother-in-law of Walter's, had the strange experience of being bitten twice at intervals of some years. I do not know the circumstances of the first bite, but I heard of it, and it occurred when he was a boy some fifteen years of age. After he became a man he was helping to make hay and was pitching onto the stack from the sweep. For some reason he stopped work for a few minutes and threw himself down on a sweep load of hay that had just been drawn in, to take a few minutes' rest. He happened to throw his hands up over his head as he lay in the hay and a rattler that had been brought in with the sweep load struck his hand. He recovered after a good deal of suffering. I have known, however, of two or three fatal bites. After we had been in Nebraska for a few years, the reaper was superseded by a celebrated Marsh harvester, which was a very efficient machine, and continued until the twine binder, now in use, put all hand binding into the discard. On the Marsh harvester and the imitations thereof, the grain was still bound with straw and by hand, but the grain was brought by elevators to receiving table, as is now the case with the twine binders. But the men stood on platforms and took the grain up in armfuls, turning to the bind-



ing tables and completing the binding there. This practically eliminated the danger to binders, for though it was no uncommon thing for the elevators to bring a wriggling and very angry rattler to the binding table (very probably he had been mangled by the sickle), yet he was always so tangled in the grain and so tumbled about by the elevators that he had very little chance to coil and strike. But the other dangers in the harvest field remained, and I had my most narrow escapes there. One day when Walter and I were going over a grain field binding up some gavels that had been thrown from the harvester without binding, (barefoot as usual), I had bound up a bundle, dropped it, and was about to step over it, when Walt, who had the eye of a hawk (while I was as blind as a mole), yelled at me, "Don't step there—there's a rattlesnake!" I had my bare foot in the air, but he was in time. I jumped back; but another second and I would have got the stroke. That same harvest, a little later, when we got to stacking, I was pitching bundles onto the load in the field; my cousin and friend, Elwin Harvey, was laying the load. I threw up the last bundle of a shock and stood looking up and speaking to Elwin of something. At last, having finished what I had to say, I cast my near-sighted eyes down at the ground and there comfortably



reposing within a foot of my bare toes lay a good-sized rattler. Why he did not bite me, I cannot see, for I had just lifted his house from over his head and that would naturally make any one peevisish. I was less forbearing than he, for he instantly died by my pitchfork. These two narrow escapes within a few days so worked on my nerves that in spite of the heat I put on boots for the remainder of that harvest. Another harvest, as I was binding up some scattered gavels that had lain some time, I bound up a bundle and cast it to one side and found that I had performed the job of binding immediately over the head of a rattlesnake, and was surprised that he had not struck me. However, having killed him, I found that he had just swallowed a gopher, whose diameter was considerably greater than his own, and he was in a state of semi-lethargy. I do not remember that any other member of our family had narrow escapes except mother. It always seemed that they were always looking after mother and me.

I will close this chapter of snakes by relating two or three blood-curdling escapes.

At one time we were building an addition onto the house on the old home place and the walls of the house were, of course, partially torn out, leaving the house open or nearly so on that side. We





were living in the house while this work went on. One hot Summer day mother baked some custard pies and carried them into the pantry and set them on the flour chest to cool. A short time later she walked into the pantry and there, coiled up about the pie plate and evidently enjoying the heat therefrom, was a large rattlesnake.

But a much more terrible experience befell her at another time. The cellar under our house was not as large as the house, a considerable portion of the earth under the house never having been removed, and projected out into the cellar. The cellar stairs ran along beside this wall of earth. Mother was going down the cellar stairs, when she heard the buzz of a snake on a level with her head, as she was then near the foot of the stairs. The snake struck at her and missed; but his leap carried him off the shelf of earth and over her shoulder, so that he fell on the cellar floor and between her and the cellar door. Mother was unhurt, but so shaken that she could hardly stand, and as she had nothing in the cellar with which to kill the reptile, she had to wait until it crawled away before she could get out of the cellar. I think that was the only time that she ever let a rattler get away. Mrs. J. G. Coil also had a most startling experience with one of these pests. She was doing some cooking in her pantry one



day and, needing to use some soda, reached up for the can, which was kept on a shelf almost as high up as she could reach. As she took the can away, there ensconced on that high pantry shelf lay a rattlesnake. I do not know or at least have forgotten whether Mrs. Coil killed the snake or whether it escaped. But the question that always puzzled me was, how did the snake get there? The house was a well finished dwelling and on a good foundation. We suppose that it must have found somewhere a mouse hole and followed it up in pursuit of mice. Well, as he is practically exterminated, we will say good-bye rattlesnake.

I have stated that there were no formidable wild animals in the Logan Valley in those days, but there was one exception, or rather, the exception came into the valley after we had lived there some years, in the shape of a huge mountain lion that in some way strayed out of his usual habitation and spent a whole Summer ranging along the creek, seemingly spending the most of his time between Lyons and the reservation line. His first depredation, so far as we knew, was the killing of a sucking colt at Tom Senter's place. At that time all the bottom land along that part of the creek was either in hay land or pasture and the rank grass and the shrubbery along the creek



formed an excellent hiding place for the beast, so no one had seen him; and when Tom Senter, a good deal excited, announced to his neighbors that some powerful beast had killed a colt some weeks old and had eaten a large portion of it, every one laughed. "Well," said Tom, indignantly, "the colt is dead and eaten; how do you account for it?" "Oh, some one said, "some of the other horses kicked and killed it and the dogs have eaten it." Tom snorted in disgust. "I tell you," said he, "the old mare is a fighter; and I found a bunch of hair that she had bitten off some animal, and it was no dog hair." But no one believed that Tom's theory was correct.

A few days later, early one morning, David Fletcher rode up to the house to say that during the previous night some powerful animal had entered Uncle Si's pasture, had left marks of his claws on two of the sucking colts that were running there with their mothers, and the third one he had succeeded in pulling down and killing. Dave said it was planned to turn out the neighborhood and surround the grove, which was partly in the pasture, and beat it up thoroughly in the hope of finding and killing the beast. Whatever the beast was, it had eaten, as was estimated, some 40 pounds of meat and blood and all thought that he would not go far with such a loaded stomach.



Well, we all turned out and in a short time we were searching through the grove, poking the muzzles of our guns into the thickets, expecting each minute to see the animal break from cover. John Lyon came along where I was poking about with my old muzzle-loader at a ready, and said: "That fellow will jump out of one of these thickets and some one will put a charge of shot into him and get clawed up for his pains." Up to that time I had been thinking all the time of what I would do to the beast, and had not given a thought to what he might do to me. Even then I did not have much respect for him, but kept right on with the hunt. But later on, after I had seen the great tracks left by his claws in the soft mud along the creek, I began to think that it might be pretty dangerous to wound him with a charge of buckshot if I had no means of getting away after shooting. Walter came to the same conclusion, and while we frequently hunted him, after that we hunted on horseback. Our plan was to shoot from the horse's back and then gallop away, under the belief that he who shoots and runs away may live to shoot another day. And indeed, as our guns were only light guns loaded with a mixture of buckshot and birdshot, the chance of killing such an animal with a single shot was exceedingly small. The longer he stayed





in the community and the more we saw of his work, the more cautious we became, our respect for the beast's prowess growing when we saw that he did not hesitate to attack two-year-old colts. So far as I knew he never succeeded in killing anything larger than a sucking colt. But every horse in our pasture under three years old had the marks of the lion's claws on its haunches. Its mode of attack appears to have been to creep up to the intended victim, leap upon its back and, fixing its hind claws in the hams of the colt, reach forward, fixing its front claws in the colt's withers, stretch its head and neck forward, aiming to fix its fangs in the jugular vein of its prey. While this method of attack speedily brings a deer or a young colt to the ground, so far as we could judge from the appearance of our band of horses on the mornings after he had made an attack, the powerful young yearlings and two-year-olds always managed, though scratched and bleeding, to shake him off and escape. Well, our first day's hunt came to naught, but in a few days some one saw him on the Logan bottom about a mile north of the village, and reported it in town. Every one felt the necessity of killing the animal or at least driving him out of the country, for no one knew how soon he might change his diet from colts to children. So again everybody



dropped everything and went lion hunting. I say every one—I mean all who could well get away. We formed in a line across the bottom and marched away up the creek, hoping to start him out of some of the patches of dead grass. Mr. N. D. Mines, who was at that time running a store in the village, could not leave his store, but after a while, finding no one about, took a small telescope and went up into the loft of the mill, where he could command a good view of the hunt for two or three miles of the bottom. After the line of hunt had passed a diagonal road that then ran across the prairie and bottom directly from Henry Mewrer's place to town, Mr. Mines, looking through his glass, saw a child walking along that road crossing a little rise of ground, and within a minute or two after the child crossed the elevation which placed him clearly in view, the lion crossed the same roll of ground. Clearly he had slipped through the line of hunters and apparently was stalking the child. One can imagine the feelings of Mines. There, brought apparently within a stone's throw by the glass, yet really more than two miles away, was the helpless, unsuspecting toddler; and there a few rods behind it crept the huge cat. There was nothing the watcher could do but to watch the apparently inevitable tragedy. But even as he



gazed a wagon came driving rapidly down the road from beyond the rise. The lion heard it, listened a moment, leaped from the road into the grass and disappeared. The child, unconscious of the terrible fate it had escaped, trudged on its way. Shortly after this, Waldo H. Lyon, who for some cause had been unable to go with the others when the hunt started, took his gun and started out, following the creek along the water's edge, and before he had gone a mile came upon the fresh track of the lion in the soft mud near the water, leading south. Evidently it thought there were too many men up creek, and after abandoning the stalking of the child, made off down the valley, going south, while the hunters went north. Of course, that hunt was a failure. In short, although hunted again and again, no armed man ever saw it. Often and often it was seen by unprepared people. At that time Walter was running a store in town and always came home to the farm every night, and he always rode a little saddle horse, of which he was very fond. Often he worked very late and would ride home at ten or eleven o'clock. One night he got along to where the bridge crosses the ditch about a quarter of a mile from Mr. Fritt's house, when the horse gave a start and stopped. There, a few yards away on the other side of the fence,



and with his forepaws on the top board and his huge neck and head reared high in the air, stood the lion, gazing coolly at Walter and the horse. And Walter has told me that while he and the horse gazed in astonishment, the huge beast opened its jaws in a prodigious yawn, as if its contempt of a man was so great as to make it tired. That settled it for the horse; he bolted and Walt hung onto the saddle.

Along in the early Fall, Z. D. Yeaton was looking for cattle on the edge of the reservation and, riding along the shore of the little lake, when glancing across, he saw the lion asleep on the opposite shore. He was unarmed and rode over to where a party of us were working on the road. We immediately left work and, getting guns, started hunting. A fox hound was procured and placed on the lion's trail; but the instant he smelled the track he decided that he was not going to risk his valuable life in hunting one. Each time that he got a whiff of that terrifying smell he would yell with fear and wrath, but not a step would he follow the trail. So far as I knew, that was the last time the lion was seen, and we heard of no more depredations. I think he must have strayed out of the country just as he had strayed in.

I have already referred to the grasshoppers, but I think, as they were for years one of the





many troubles with which the settlers had to contend, I will give my readers a more detailed account of them. The flying grasshopper, or Rocky Mountain locust, is a creature of mystery. It came out of the great unknown in countless millions, borne like thistledown on the wings of the wind; and when it had tormented the settlers for its allotted time, it again mounted on the wings of the wind and passed into the unknown just as mysteriously as it came. The insect when fully matured is about an inch and a quarter in length, with wings that are about a quarter of an inch longer than the body. The hind or hopping legs are powerful and are of a bright red color. The prevailing color of the insect is brown. They first appeared in western Iowa and eastern Kansas and Nebraska about 1866, and the last that I ever saw or heard of, were hatched out along the Sioux River in South Dakota in the Spring of 1879, and flew away in June, after completing their work of crop destruction.

The first that I ever saw sailed down upon our little crop the first Summer that we lived in Nebraska. We had only a little patch of two or three acres of corn and about an equal amount of oats. It was just when the oats were almost ready to cut and the corn was just silking out. It is a peculiarity of these insects that they seem



to instinctively direct their attack in such a manner as to do a maximum of damage with a minimum amount of effort. If they alight in an oat field when the oats are headed out, they do not eat the leaves or even the grains, but they attack the little threads or fibres that attach the grains to the straw and eat them off, dropping the grains to the ground. As a few cuts of the powerful mandibles of the insect severs the slender filament, the destruction of a field of oats is soon accomplished, with the straw left standing and the oats scattered on the ground. In case of the corn, if it is earing, they attack the fresh silk only and, eating that off, prevent the fertilization of the grain, and leaving a field of worthless stalks.

At the time that I speak of their alighting for the first time on our land, our little patch of grain was just in condition for quick destruction. The hoppers came down like snow, but seemed to get more numerous in one corner of the field than elsewhere. So numerous were they in the road that passed the field that it seemed to me they were piled two inches deep. We gave up the crop as lost, but suddenly, obeying some whimsical impulse, they arose in the air and sailed away. The corner of the field where they had been most numerous was badly damaged, but so short had



been their stop that the greater part of the grain had suffered but little. For many years after that there were great flights of grasshoppers every Summer. Sometimes for many days at a time all one had to do was shade his eyes and look up toward the sun to see myriads of what looked like flying snowflakes speeding along with the wind, and know that there were enough of the insects overhead to devour every green thing, should they be seized with a whim to alight. Thousands of settlers lost crops in that way, but we were fortunate. Several years they dropped in on our settlement in the Fall and left a legacy in the shape of a few billions of eggs. Their favorite place for doing this was a closely fed pasture or ground that from any cause was nearly bare of herbage. Each female locust is furnished with a very efficient boring apparatus, with which in a very short time she makes a beautiful smoothly cut hole in the ground (apparently the harder the ground, the better she likes it), about an eighth of an inch in diameter and an inch deep, which she fills with her eggs. These eggs lie through the Winter and hatch along in April, when the sun begins to warm up the ground. As soon as the young hoppers come out of the ground they begin to eat any green thing that may be at hand. Let us suppose that they have hatched



out in a pasture adjoining a wheat field; they all go into the wheat field. But what seems queer, they do not scatter over the field, but instead they go like a line of battle in close order and they sweep every green thing as they go on. They will occupy but a few feet of ground from front to rear, but will perhaps extend their line the whole length of the field. In front of their phalanx all is fresh and verdant; behind it the earth is black as though swept by fire. Taking advantage of their way of sweeping through the field in a mass, Uncle Si saved a field of wheat one Spring by hauling a lot of dry straw to the field where they were and strewing it in a windrow in front of where the line of attack was. As night came on the hoppers, feeling the evening chill, crept into the dry straw for warmth. Then after dark Uncle Si and the boys went out with torches and set fire to the straw in many places and the great majority of the hoppers were destroyed. But, of course, nothing of that kind can be done when the matured hoppers light down upon the crops.

Well, I ought to apologize for going so much into detail about the grasshoppers; but they nearly ruined many early settlers and for a long period were a source of anxiety to all of us. And as we hope that they will never come again, it is well





for the coming generations to know something of them.

I have said much about the hard and disagreeable things of the pioneer days, but I don't want my children and grandchildren to think it was all unpleasant. I think there were more real pleasures, as well as more hardships, in those days. To the sportsman, Burt County was at that time a paradise. Prairie chickens bred there in countless thousands. And in Spring and Fall there were myriads of geese, brants and ducks of all kinds. Fishing was fairly good, and in the Spring high water the buffalo fish used to come out of the creek onto the overflowed bottoms and we used to spear them with pitchforks close up to the barnyard on the old farm.

Then there was a sense of freedom on those wild prairies, with the scanty population, that never can obtain in an old settled community. The feeling of neighborliness is so strong under those conditions—a family may live ten miles away, but they are your neighbors, and you know them far better than you do the family on the next lot in the city.

I could write on indefinitely of the happenings of those old days, but I know that it is much less interesting for those who read than it is for me who writes, so I will stop.



## PART III





EDWARD BURTON EVERETT



### PART III.

I shall now conclude this little book by a chapter which will have no particular interest for any one but the descendants of Franklin Everett and Clara Everett, nee Spencer, his wife. I presume that no one else to whom I present one of these volumes will care to read what follows; but I believe to the descendants of Franklin Everett, the anecdotes and experiences herein set forth will have an interest which will grow greater as the years pass on.

I have already described the removal of Franklin Everett and his family from Alamakee County, Iowa, to Burt County, Nebraska. In spite of all the drawbacks incident to a new country, and which I have already described at some length, Franklin Everett prospered in his new home and within a few years had a fine farm and a large amount of livestock about him. Occasionally during his farm life in Iowa he had experience in the buying and shipping of livestock, especially hogs, and usually prospered in these ventures. After he had become firmly established in his new home and the farmers in the community had reached that point in their farm-





ing where they were able to produce a considerable number of hogs, he again commenced the purchase and shipment of livestock.

About the year 1875 he built a store in what is now the town of Lyons, being located on the corner of Main and Second streets, now occupied by a brick building, still owned by some of the Everett family. This building he filled with a stock of goods, such as are suitable to the wants of the people in a new community, and Walter Everett, the second son, although but sixteen years of age, took charge of this store, and with the general management of Franklin Everett, speedily made a success of the venture. It was but a short time before Walter was able to handle it in every respect, with no special assistance from father, who was busy with the management of his farm and handling of livestock. This store was operated by Franklin Everett and son for about six years, and when in 1881 the railroad was built into Lyons, they, believing that there would be too much competition for a store to be profitable, sold out their business, retiring with a most handsome earning as a result of their six years of mercantile life. They then opened a little bank, the first in that part of Burt County, doing business in the same building in which was the postoffice, father being the postmaster





MRS. EDWARD B. EVERETT, NEE PIPER



and Walter acting as deputy. When the bank was first opened they had no burglar-proof safe, using the same old fireproof safe that had been used in the store. The deposits, which were fairly good from the state, <sup>9/10</sup> were generally hid in a barrel of beans or some other convenient or secret place, while the old safe carried but a nominal amount; for father well knew the great danger of burglary. The bank prospered and soon was doing a fine business. As some slight protection against robbery, Edward B. Everett, the youngest son, slept in a back room adjoining the bank office. He was then a boy of about eighteen years. One Saturday night in May, 1883, Bert went to bed and to sleep, as usual. He awoke about midnight and found two men beside him, one sitting astride him with a revolver pointed in his face, while the other held both his wrists. The coolness of the boy under the conditions was remarkable. He said he realized instantly that the bank was to be robbed, but felt certain if he made no resistance they would not harm him; as resistance would be utterly useless, he inquired what they wanted. One of them answered that they wanted him to open the safe. Now, Bert did not know the combination of the safe and truthfully told them so. They asked him where his gun was. He said he had none. One robber then asked, "What in



hell are you sleeping here for if you have no gun?" When he had satisfied them that he could not open the safe, one of them remarked that it made no particular difference, that he could do it in a few minutes. They had brought with them a clothes line, cut from a neighbor's yard, and with that they tied his hands behind him and gagged him with a dirty towel. This, by the way, was the greatest shock of the whole affair to my mother, who afterward said, "Just think of it, they stuffed that dirty towel right in poor Bert's mouth." Bert said it seemed to him they were not more than ten minutes opening the safe, and it is likely that gagged as he was and with the fear of what the robbers might do to him, the time undoubtedly seemed fully as long as it was. At any rate, they opened the safe very quickly, but probably were disappointed in the amount which they secured, as father or Walter, according to their usual custom, had hidden the bulk of money in some other place. The robbers, however, secured some three or four hundred dollars in cash and about the same amount in postage stamps (these funds being the property of the U. S. Government).

Having secured the plunder, they went back to Bert's bed, where he lay with his hands tied behind him and one foot tied to each bed post, and







WILLIAM S. NEWMYER



said to him, "We have to leave you now. You tell the old man that all he needs to do is to raise the interest rates a little and he will soon even this up." They temporarily removed the gag from Bert's mouth while standing over him with the gun, and he, having fully recovered his nerve, said, "Don't you know, boys, tomorrow is Sunday, and how am I to go to Sunday school if you leave me tied up here?" They laughed and said, "Well, we guess you'll have to stay away from Sunday school one day." Before leaving him they said, "Now, if you give us your word of honor not to give the alarm, we will leave you ungagged." He told them he would not promise, but he would give the alarm as soon as he could. Accordingly, they went away, leaving him bound and gagged.

It chanced that a day or two previous, in walking along the street or road, he had found and picked up a large clasp knife, open, which was so firmly rusted it was not easy to close. He had dropped it in his coat pocket without closing it, and when he had retired the night of the robbery he had thrown his overcoat over the foot of the bed. It occurred to him that if he could in any way get the knife to his hands he might manage to cut the rope with it; and after much wriggling and squirming he succeeded in getting the coat



into a position that enabled him to get his hands into the pocket and get the old clasp knife into a position where he could cut the clothes line, with which his wrists were bound, against the edge of it. Having accomplished this, the rest was easy. He speedily removed the gag from his mouth, untied his ankles from the bed posts and rushed out to give the alarm.

In cutting the rope from his wrists he gashed himself quite badly on the old knife blade, but in his excitement he never noticed this. He speedily had the whole town out and sent men in all directions. This was about 2:30 in the morning. They found that the robbers had taken Franklin Everett's favorite horse and a horse and saddle from one of the neighbors. The horses were found about daylight by Mr. J. B. Lyon on the outskirts of Decatur.

About two days later word was received to go to Fremont, as they suspected some people there. Bert Everett and his father went down and they thought it was the same men. At the depot in Fremont these men resisted arrest and one shot the deputy sheriff through the mouth, the bullet coming out through the back of his head. Then they ran across to some vacant lots to where there was a man plowing and demanded that he unhitch his horses, each man taking one. They





MRS. WILLIAM S. NEWMYER, NEE CLARA ETHEL EVERETT





rode these horses to a bridge across the Platte River. There is an island in the river, and when they reached this it is supposed they thought they were on the other shore and, leaving the horses, attempted to hide in the brush.

The sheriff with a posse of men were in pursuit and the criminals, finding an old boat, got into the water and kept the boat between them and the posse. The sheriff, Robert Gregg, shot at the men a number of times, and when he had only one shot left succeeded in shooting one through the head. Then the other man immediately surrendered.

When the men entered the boat they had two suitcases. Only one of these could be found, it containing a complete burglar outfit.

The one that surrendered pleaded guilty to shooting the deputy sheriff and was sentenced to state's prison for seven years. No evidence was found that they robbed the bank, but there was no doubt but that they were guilty.

This slight loss had no appreciable effect on the banking business, and Walter continued to conduct it most successfully for a number of years. Then his health being impaired to some extent by the close application to business which had characterized him from his sixteenth year, the bank was reorganized and other parties took an



interest in it, and it still continues as the Farmers' State Bank of Lyons, Nebraska, the controlling interest still owned by the Everett family. At the present time Franklin Everett is president, W. S. Newmyer (who is the husband of the only daughter and youngest child of Franklin Everett) is its cashier.

While Franklin Everett and Walter Everett had been carrying on the mercantile and banking business, assisted by Edward B. Everett, the writer had taught school, read law and opened a law office in Lyons, Nebraska, where he practiced for some fifteen years; but the town being small and the law practice limited, he became interested in other things; being interested in lumber yards at Lyons, Wakefield, Winside, Concord, Laurel and Coleridge, Nebraska, and a general store at Laurel, Nebraska.

Edward B. Everett, a few years after his adventure with the burglars, married Amanda Piper, and went to live on the old home farm, Franklin Everett and wife having erected a home and moved to the village of Lyons.

About the year 1900 the family became interested in the building of the Pan American Railroad in Oaxaca and Chiapas, Mexico, an account of which follows:





WALTER EVERETT



## THE PAN AMERICAN RAILROAD.

In the year 1900 Walter Everett made the acquaintance of James M. Neeland in Los Angeles. Neeland had been in Mexico and could speak Spanish fluently. He was one of the most remarkable men that I have ever met. His initiative and imagination were marvelous. He would conceive of schemes so great and daring that it made an ordinary man catch his breath, and yet his vivid imagination and great command of language enabled him to convince his hearers that the success of the plan was at least possible. "And," he would say, in concluding one of his word pictures of the working out of some great plan, "it will make us *rich* beyond the dreams of avarice." Naturally he was a born promoter. He had fallen in with a rather shrewd old Mexican, Jose Pepe Mora ~~by~~ name, from whom he had learned many facts concerning a railroad that had, some twelve years before, been projected in the States of Oaxaca and Chiapas, in Southern Mexico.

This railroad had been in process of construction by the Barring Bros., of England, at the time their failure shook the financial world in the '80s, and was to have extended from San Geronimo, on the Tehuantepec Railroad, south-





easterly along the isthmus to the frontier of Guatamala. It was intended as a military road and was much desired by Porfirio Diaz, who was then the ruler of Mexico.

When news of the failure of Barring Bros. reached the construction camps in Chiapas, the employees were panic-stricken, and they abandoned the job in about the same manner that burglars would leave the cracking of a safe at the sound of a policeman's rattle. Barring Bros. had assembled machinery, rolling stock and rails at Tonalá and Aurora to the value of hundreds of thousands of dollars, and all this property, together with many miles of grading, had reverted to the Mexican Government. At the time that Neeland and Mora took up the project much of the machinery had been ruined by the action of time, climate and vandals, but the eighty miles of good rails were uninjured, and much of the other property still held value.

The Mexican Government would give this property, together with a large bonus in government bonds, to any one who would build the road, so Neeland and Mora assured Walter. Neeland drew rosy pictures of how easily he would make all participants "rich beyond the dreams of avarice" if Walter would finance the scheme. Walter became interested and he and Neeland came to





MRS. WALTER EVERETT, NEE MANN



Nebraska and laid the matter before father, Burton and myself. Neeland represented himself as a practical railroad builder with much experience. "You fellows put up the money and I will put on my overalls and go down and build the road," was his airy statement.

Experience proved to us that he was incompetent, where executive ability was required, as a child of ten years. He was a promoter, pure and simple, and a good one.

Our family became interested. Franklin Everett, always wise, far-seeing and cautious, said to us—his sons: "You fellows can put your money in there blindly if you want to, but I am going to see for myself." He got A. B. Lyon to go with him, and in spite of his age, about sixty-eight, and extremely poor health, went to Mexico, and drove over the proposed line in a two-wheeled ox cart. He was too weak and sick to ride a horse and there was no other means of conveyance. In spite of the great hardships he endured and his constant sickness, he came back enthusiastic. "The greatest chance I ever saw," was his report.

About this time, it was in 1901, Hon. H. P. Shumway and I determined to go into Mexico and get our own ideas at first hand. We visited Chihuahua, Mexico City, Puebla and many smaller



places and were impressed with the opportunities that the country offered. But we had heard so much of the "deadly climate" and "bad water" of the tropics that we really failed to enjoy what should have been a most delightful trip.

Mexico City, under the splendid government established by Porfirio Diaz (one of the greatest men that the nineteenth century produced in any country), was making wonderful progress. For hundreds, and perhaps thousands of years, a city had existed there. Originally its site had been a mountain lake. Gradually the water had passed away and as it grew dryer the city had grown up. Perhaps at first it was built on piles—anyway at the time of the conquest by Cortez the standing water still made causeways necessary in parts of the city. The city was entirely without drainage, and even where the surface was free from water, it stood at all times within a few inches of the top of the ground. It would seem that with a dense population, under such conditions, pestilence in some form would have been at all times present. But such is the disinfecting power of almost constant sunshine and the pure breezes that sweep down from the mountains that surround the valley, that even under the conditions I have described the death rate was far lower than one would expect. With good sanitation, it would





become a health resort. Diaz was at the time of our visit putting in a system of sewers. The streets were being torn up and trenches dug. The accumulated filth of ages was being exposed and the stench was horrible; but when the work was completed Mexico City was freed from danger of great filth disease epidemics, and made one of the most delightful residence cities of the world.

From Mexico City we went to Puebla, thence to Oaxaca. While there we visited the celebrated ruins of Mitla.

Shumway and I had often heard of the wonderful ruins of Mitla, situate some fifty miles to the southward of the city of Oaxaca, and we determined to take advantage of our stay at Oaxaca to visit them. We had been in Mexico so short a time that we had not acquired enough Spanish to enable us to get about conveniently. It chanced that we stopped at the only American hotel in the city. It was kept by a widow lady and her daughter, a young girl of some sixteen or seventeen years. In making inquiries of our landlady as to the best methods of reaching the ruins, it developed that she and her daughter had never seen them, although they had lived within a short distance, above mentioned, for many years; and we, feeling the necessity of some one who could speak the language, after some hesitation, ventured to



suggest that if she and her daughter would make the trip with us we would pay all expenses. To our delight the offer was accepted in the same spirit in which it was made, and the next day we all climbed into an old-fashioned coach drawn by four very decrepit-looking horses, and started to see the ruins.

There is at Mitla a considerable town, and we found there what, in Mexico, passed for a good hotel. We were obliged to stay the night there, as it took the entire day to drive from Oaxaca to Mitla.

I shall never forget the joke on Herbert, occasioned by the fear which we both had, of drinking the water; for at that time we imagined that all tropical streams were more or less polluted and poisoned. After driving all day in the dust we, of course, were tormented with thirst. We sat in our room after the day's drive was over and H. P. said, "I am going to buy a bottle of beer." Now, both H. P. and I were teetotalers. I laughed at him, saying that the beer would probably be worse than the water. However, he invested in a bottle of beer and drank the same eagerly. H. P. congratulated himself that he had been able to quench his thirst without danger of contracting some disease. The beer was warm and stale and there was no ice in town. We had



not long been in bed when I was awakened by his groans. "What is the matter, H. P.?" said I. "Oh, that beer has made me so sick!" and a very sick man he was. However, nature came to his relief and he threw up the beer, after which we got a fair night's sleep.

Next day we visited the ruins and examined them carefully. Their celebrity rests upon their antiquity and the mystery which surrounds their origin, rather than any intrinsic merits in the ruins themselves. They are certainly beautiful, but an American contractor, given the proper material, could reproduce them in a few days. Considered as the work of a race of savages, who were ignorant of even the simple principle of the arch, and who, to cap their openings, used huge oblong blocks of unhewn stone, the ruins were certainly remarkable. The greatest wonder is, how, without the aid of any modern machinery, or even, so far as we know, without draft animals of any kind, they were able to place in position lintels and caps of stone weighing many tons. It would seem, to look at these huge blocks, that it would be impossible to get enough naked human strength around them to raise them to the positions in which they were placed. Absolutely nothing is known of the race who built these ancient buildings, as even the natives found in the country at



the time of the conquest by the Spaniards knew nothing of their origin.

We returned to the city of Oaxaca, and shortly thereafter went to Vera Cruz. One scene which we witnessed while in Oaxaca gives so clear an illustration of social and agricultural conditions in south central Mexico, at least the conditions that prevailed at that time, that I must relate it.

Passing along the country road at some distance from any large town, we came upon a great field of wheat, ripe and being harvested. In this field were a party of reapers, probably twenty in number, who were supplied with the old-fashioned hand sickle. Behind these reapers, wrapped in his blanket, came an overseer, and behind the overseer, gleaning the lost heads of wheat, was a woman. The scene struck me so forcibly that I stopped and said "Herbert, see Ruth! see Boaz! see the reapers! That certainly is a reproduction of the old Bible scene, as described in the book." And he agreed with me. In short, in that part of Mexico, and at that time, people were living in the same stage of civilization as when the fair Moabitess became the bride of Boaz.

While in Oaxaca some American whom we met there told us the following story:

One of the sons of a wealthy landholder in that district had been sent to the United States





for his education. (I will say here in passing that very many of the wealthy ranchmen of Mexico sent at least one of their sons for a period of three or four years to some good school in the United States.) This young man returned to his native state filled with new ideas which he desired to introduce, and being a man of wealth, before leaving the United States, he ordered shipped to him at Oaxaca a number of American steel plows. The natives having always plowed with a crooked stick, shod with a point of iron, looked askance at this American innovation. In Mexico the will of the master of the hacienda is never gainsaid by the peons, and grudgingly they accepted the new implements and went to work. A day or two later the young master went abroad to his fields to examine the work being done and, to his great astonishment, found that one handle had been sawed from each plow. He said, "Why did you cut the handle?" "Why, master," answered the majordomo, "we never used but one handle on a plow; why should we leave two on these?"

On reaching Vera Cruz we really felt more fear of sickness than at any other point we had visited in Mexico. At that time there was no pretense of any sewerage system. The town of Vera Cruz, situated on the unhealthy gulf coast, was paved with small cobble stones. On each side of the



streets was a gutter, down which flowed all the filth of the city. The only real scavengers the city had were the buzzards, of which there were myriads. They were everywhere—on the roofs of the houses, on the passing cars, utterly fearless, for they were protected by law. They are tamer than our domestic chickens, but to us northerners they seemed uncanny.

As we sat in our room, in the second story of the best hotel the town afforded, we could see their curious prying eyes peering in at us from the roofs adjoining and from across the street. I confess the look of the filthy creatures got on my nerves. After sitting for an hour, I said to H. P., "Those buzzards are watching us and waiting to pick our bones, and the best thing we can do is to get out of Vera Cruz as quickly as possible." He jumped up with a shout of delight and said, "Say, I have been hoping to hear you say that; I did not want to be the first one to say it." We started north at once and thought we would never go into Mexico again; but by the time we reached home the unpleasant things had, to a certain extent, faded from our minds. We thought of the wonderful opportunities the country seemed to offer and soon were enthusiastically favorable to Mr. Neeland's scheme.



Hon. H. P. Shumway and our family having announced their approval of the railroad scheme, we laid the matter before Mr. J. O. Milligan, Mr. John D. Haskell and Mr. Darius Mathewson, all of Wakefield, Nebraska, and all men of high character and large means.

After a careful consideration of our reports and also the report of an expert engineer, who had gone over the proposed line, they agreed to join us in the enterprise. At about this time, also, Walter Everett became acquainted with Mr. Max Newmark and Mr. Berthold Baruch, two prominent Jewish gentlemen of Los Angeles, who were also men of high character and large wealth. These gentlemen became interested in the proposition and also joined us with their advice and capital. To assist us in financing the railroad work we obtained from President Diaz a concession for the establishment, at Tuxtla Gutierrez, capital of the State of Chiapas, of a bank of issue. This concession was exclusive and authorized us to create and operate the only bank of issue in that state. Under the law of Mexico we were authorized, upon paying in a capital of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in Mexican silver, which silver must actually be in the bank building when we opened for business, to issue paper currency based on said silver to the amount of seven



hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Our plan was to use these bank notes in paying expense of building the railroad, the bank loaning to the railroad construction company.

I will say here that this plan failed because the peons, who were hired to perform the labor, were not accustomed to paper money and our bank notes would not circulate among them to any considerable extent. This, however, we could only learn by experience.

It was arranged that Walter Everett should be president of both the railroad company and the bank and be here, there and everywhere, as it were, looking after the general interests. Fremont Everett was to be general manager of the Banco De Chiapas, Edward B. Everett was to be treasurer of the railroad company; J. M. Neeland, our promoter, was to be general manager of the railroad; Delbert E. Lyon was to go as cashier of the bank; his uncle, John B. Lyon, as skilled man and adviser in mechanical lines; and Alfred B. Lyon, as confidential agent and paymaster.

Later a son of J. O. Milligan joined us in our work and proved himself a most efficient and energetic man.

On Christmas night of 1901, the writer, Fremont Everett, his wife and daughter, and Delbert E. Lyon left Lyons, Nebraska, to go to Tuxtla





Gutierrez, capital of the State of Chiapas. About the same time John B. and A. B. Lyon went to Tonalá, in the same state, for the purpose of taking up the work of railway construction. My family, Burt Lyon and I went first to Mexico City, where we were delayed for some weeks in the necessary work of gathering up and transporting the two hundred and fifty thousand silver dollars necessary to the opening of the Banco De Chiapas. A part of this silver was bought in the city of Mazatlán and transported by steamer to Tonalá. It was found impossible to buy any considerable amount of silver in Mexico City, and for weeks telegrams and letters were flying about the republic in search of the necessary silver.

As descriptive of things in Mexico City at that time I herewith copy a letter from my daughter Clara to the home paper in Lyons:

### LETTER FROM MEXICO.

CLARA EVERETT TELLS OF THE MANY STRANGE  
SCENES IN MEXICO CITY.

Mexico City, Mexico, Jan. 29.

Mr. Basler, Editor of Lyons Sun:

Dear Mr. Basler — As you requested me to write, I will do so and tell you about some of the sights which seemed strange to me.



A short time before entering Mexico City we passed many fields of the maguey. This plant resembles in appearance our century plant, and from it is obtained pulque or native whiskey of the Mexicans. Pulque much resembles milk in color.

The other morning we visited the Mexican market. On entering we passed through a gate on a side street into an open court paved with rough stones. Seated in rows on the pavement were women and men, in looks and dress much resembling our Indians. In front of them, arranged in piles, which they were constantly handling over with their dirty fingers, was nearly everything in the line of eatables. Passing on, we saw various booths, some filled with odd Mexican crockery, such as pitchers, water jugs and bottles; others contained collections of old knives, pistols, brass candlesticks, Catholic beads of ivory and steel with a little ivory cross attached. Then here would stand a man with various colored cotton handkerchiefs for sale, another with lace dangling from his arms and shoulders.

The dress of the poor laborer of the city is usually white cotton trousers held up by a red sash, blouse of same material as trousers, and head topped with a peaked sombrero, Spanish name for hat. At night and in the morning when it is cold



they wear a blanket with a hole in the middle, through which they put their head. There are a great many beggars here in the streets. Women with babies in their arms come to you and beg. The babies hardly old enough to walk grab at a centava if held out to them. It is pitiful to see how poor and ragged the poor and low classes are. Labor is very cheap. Men called *cargadores* will carry your heavy trunks from the depot to your hotel for 50 cents Mexican, a little less than 25 cents our money. Two of them, each with a trunk on his back, carried ours up to a room on the third floor after having carried them several blocks. They use their backs for carrying anything very heavy. You may see them on the streets loaded down with lumber, sacks of straw or stone, or balanced on the head so nicely they need not be steadied by the hands, even when running, are baskets of bread, fruit and sweets.

It is not customary for people of the better class to carry heavy bundles on the street. We often hire a boy to carry our purchases, as he will carry it a mile for a centavo. The wealthy make a display of their wealth by having a fine carriage procession every night between six and eight o'clock. Down San Francisco street, a principal street of the city, where there are no electric car lines, will extend carriages sometimes three and



four deep up one side and down the other, slowly or sometimes stopped in blockade. The occupants are richly dressed. The coachman and footman sit in front in fine livery. Once in a while an auto is seen in the procession.

The houses of the better class are usually three stories high and built around patios or gardens. In place of windows are double glass doors, which open onto iron-railed balconies overlooking the street or patio. People prefer living in the second or third story, as it is warmer and also more healthful.

The wealthy often rent their lower floor for a saloon or some similar purpose.

At night a street seems enclosed by high walls, as the buildings are built in a solid block, no alleys being between, and as shutters closed over the glass doors hide the lights within. Policemen are stationed one on each corner, lanterns in hand, although the light of the lantern is dimmed by the electric glare. As we pass through the street, crouched in the deep doorways, where they will spend the night, are seen various specimens of humanity.

We have only felt one earthquake, although there have been several, one rather violent one occurring early in the morning, failed even to awaken us. We found a scorpion in our room,





which escaped into a hole in the wall before we could kill it, which caused us more worry than the earthquakes. We can depend upon every day being fine and so much resembling the day before that no one thinks of remarking on the weather. As a result of this some of the peons cook and eat on the street. Seated on the pavement around a small stove, on which rests a dish of Mexican food, may be seen a family. First one dishes out a dainty portion with his hand and then another."

While in Mexico City we lived at a hotel, and one day Mrs. Everett discovered a scorpion clinging to her skirts, and as we had always heard that the sting of a scorpion was deadly, we went to the landlady and gave the alarm. "Oh," said she, "the scorpions here are nearly harmless, but when you get down in the hot country (where we were going) they are deadly." I will pause here to say, while in our construction camp in southern Oaxaca, my wife was stung twice by scorpions, and when she mentioned the fact that they were deadly the natives replied they were not very bad there, but they were deadly in Texas. As a matter of fact, a scorpion sting is but little worse than that of a honey bee.

At last, after many weeks delay and within the time that our concession with the bank would



expire, we succeeded in getting, or thinking we had gotten together all the silver necessary. We started from Mexico City sometime in February, 1902, for our ultimate destination, the capital of Chiapas. At that time railroads from Mexico City southward were generally under construction and very few of them finished. We were forced to go to Vera Cruz over the Mexican National Railway, where we took a dirty and exceedingly cranky Mexican coast steamer to the town of Coatzacoatzacoahuac, now called Port Mexico. From there we took the Tehuantepec Railroad across the isthmus to San Geronimo, a town on the Tehuantepec Railroad about thirty-five miles from the Pacific Coast. This town, San Geronimo, was the initial point of the Pan American Railroad construction, which we were about to undertake. The concession called for a railroad from San Geronimo to the border of Guatamala, a distance of about three hundred miles.

When we arrived at San Geronimo we found that the actual construction work was to be first started at or near Tonalá, a point about one hundred and twenty-five miles down the coast from San Geronimo. We learned also that there was no method of reaching Tuxtla except to go across the country on horseback or to take a coasting steamer from Salina Cruz to Port Arista, which





MRS. FREMONT EVERETT, NEE SHUMWAY



was the port of entry for Tonalá, and thence over a mountain road by wagon. The time when the bank must be opened was so near at hand that I bought a horse and saddle at San Geronimo and undertook the journey across country, as being the quickest method of reaching the capital of Chiapas, while my wife and daughter took the easier but more circuitous route by steamer to Tonalá. Fortunately we fell in with a most worthy couple, a missionary and his wife, McDonald by name, who were also going into the State of Chiapas in the course of their work. They had been in Mexico some time and spoke the language fluently. This made it much pleasanter for my wife and daughter, who traveled in their company.

The method of placing passengers on board these coast steamers was very amusing to on-lookers and somewhat startling to passengers, especially to ladies. Few of the towns along the coast of Mexico have any harbor, simply an open roadstead. The steamer would sail as close to the shore as safety permitted, and goods that would not be injured by sea water were thrown into the sea and floated to shore, while things that would not bear this rude treatment were conveyed by lighters; but the water close to shore was too shoal for even the lighters to reach the





bank, therefore the passengers were usually carried to the lighters in the arms of a brawny Mexican, and when the lighters reached the steamers, the passengers stepped into a large box, to which a cable was attached, and quickly swung to the deck of the steamer like any other bale of goods. My wife was inclined to hesitate in getting into the lighter, and while she hesitated she was seized from behind by a sturdy Mexican, and before she knew what had happened was safely deposited in the lighter.

When they reached Tonalá they were provided with a two-seated platform spring wagon, which I had shipped from Omaha for use there, and our party secured four horses and a driver to take the ladies from Tonalá to Tuxtla Gutierrez, a distance of about one hundred and twenty-five miles across the mountains. In the meantime I had traveled in company with the Government inspector, who was, under the law, an official of our bank and who must be present at the opening thereof, and his wife across country on horseback.

I reproduce herewith a letter written by me at the time of this trip, which is more exact than I can give from memory :





FREMONT EVERETT



## TAKES A WILD RIDE.

FREMONT EVERETT TELLS OF A THRILLING  
NIGHT'S EXPERIENCE—TRIP THROUGH  
DARKEST MEXICO.

Hacienda, Lano Grande,  
Chiapas, Feb. 21, 1902.

H. H. Basler,  
Lyons, Nebr.

Dear Friend:

I have a few hours here while my horse is resting and will write you a letter, which you may publish or not, as seems to you best. In it I will endeavor to describe my first night in the State of Chiapas.

✱ On February 16th I left Mrs. Everett and Clara to go with friends by steamer from Salina Cruz to Tonalá. This I did that they might be spared the 200-mile ride on horseback, that I was about to take. I bought in San Geronimo a lazy, obstinate little mountain horse, of which I at once formed a very poor opinion, a very good saddle and a pair of saddle bags. These latter I packed with a change of underclothing, the important papers which I carried, and a package of small silver coins and copper centavos, the money current among the poor Indians of the mountains which I must cross to reach Tuxtla, the capital



of Chiapas. Then, in company with Sr. Don Clemente Castillo, the Government inspector, of our bank, his wife, child and two servants, started up the valley of the White Water River, called in Spanish the Augua de Blanco.

The journey for the first three days was uneventful. The river valley is mostly covered with small timber, but the country is semi-arid and very large trees are not numerous. However, the rainy season lasts four months, so that good cereal crops can be raised where the people are not too lazy to plant and cultivate them. Although this is the dry season, the valley is well watered by streams from the mountains and we never rode far without crossing a rapidly flowing brook. Many of the trees are loaded with beautiful flowers and there are growing wild many canas, begonias and other house plants of the north. Coconuts, oranges, lemons, limes and bananas are plentiful. But my story: These three days were in Oaxaca; the third day near night we entered Chiapas and camped at an Indian hut just over the boundary. As the sunshine is very warm in the middle of the day, we had planned to sleep until midnight, then get up and ride by moonlight. At two o'clock in the morning we were mounted and Senora Castillo led the way, riding an ambling little mule. Suddenly from the road-





side bolted a pack of Indian dogs, causing the mule to shy and she was thrown heavily. We got her back to the hut, and as she was unable to ride, it was decided that Sr. Castillo and the child and one servant should remain with her while the other servant, an Indian mountaineer, and I should ride to this place, thirty-three miles, for a carriage. As Sr. Castello and his wife had during our journey together treated me with a kindness and courtesy that I have seldom seen surpassed or equalled, I was very anxious to get assistance for the injured lady, and the guide and I set off at a round pace over the mountain road, for we had now left the valley and were crossing a very rugged mountain range.

I soon began to fear that my Indian guide was possessed of a devil, for he dashed along in the dim light of the moon in a way that made me think that my apparently awkward and obstinate pony would surely fall and break my neck. But that broncho was mountain-bred and, like Abe Lincoln, he always rose to the occasion. On and on went the Indian and on and on I followed, hugging close to the overhanging mountain walls, along the brink of the fathomless gulfs into which I dared not to look, winding and twisting among crags and trees, dashing through mountain torrents, the loose stones of their beds rolling and



slipping under the feet of our horses. Still all this time we did have a road, a rough road, it is true, but still a road. Suddenly the wild man in the lead turned at right angles and forced his horse down a faint trail of the mountainside, down, sliding, slipping and stumbling, until at last we reached the bottom of a deep canyon where the moonlight scarcely penetrated. What did the guide mean? Was he leading me away to rob and murder me? I was unarmed and he was a powerful fellow. Still I was completely lost and there was nothing to do but follow him. We rode for a long time along a mountain stream, crossing and recrossing it, as the dim trail wound in and out to avoid overhanging cliffs. Slowly the moon sank in the west and the canyon became so dark that I could not see the guide, who hurried along, leaving me at times far behind. Fearing that I should miss the trail and get entirely lost, I twice called to him to wait, which gave him great amusement and he chuckled at my discomfiture in a most exasperating way. He could not speak a word of English and I very little Spanish, so I could not give him the blessing he deserved. At last he left the torrent bed and turned, in the thick darkness, up a trail that showed dimly on the mountainside, so steep that we dismounted, that our horses, unincumbered, might scramble



up. Every moment my respect for my broncho increased; not once did he stumble in the darkness, not once slip. Up and down inclines, over boulders, along black gulfs that would have tried the nerve of a mountain sheep, that pony carried me, quaking with fear, but perfectly unharmed. On the open road in broad day, he was an unbroken cayuse. On the mountainside, in thick darkness, surrounded on all sides by terrors real and imaginary, I would not have exchanged him for Maude S. or any racer that ever trod the turf. Higher and higher we climbed. Now we were skirting the mountainside at a great altitude. At my left the mighty shoulder of the Sierra, beneath me a thread of a footpath. At my right a black and mighty void like that which separated Lazarus and Dives, and faintly from its depths came the roar of a mighty river. About me were giant pines, their leaves sighing softly in the night winds. My fear had passed away, but a great awe fell over me, for, dimly seen in the faint light of dawn, the scene was of stupendous grandeur. A quick turn, a sharp upward scramble, and we were at the summit of the pass and on comparatively level ground. The guide condescended to tell me that he had brought me across the range on a burro trail—a short cut. A burro trail, in



the thick darkness that precedes dawn, and on horseback.

Evidently the fellow had got, by reason of my calling out for him to wait for me, a very poor opinion of my nerve, for he proceeded to attempt to frighten me by saying "Tigre akee," that is, there are tigers in this place. I have no doubt it was true, but after the real danger through which I had passed, imaginary mountain lions were rather a relief, and I promptly informed the smart fellow that tigers were "muy bueno" (very good), but precipices were "muy malo." He had nothing further to say, and we reached this place, where we were most kindly received and provided with a good breakfast, and a carriage was promptly sent for the injured lady. We had ridden eleven leagues over those mountains in five hours.

I expect to reach my destination tomorrow.

The injured lady was brought safely to the ranch, where I wrote the foregoing letter, and there her husband secured a carriage to transport her the rest of the distance to Tuxtla. One more incident of this trip I must give as illustrating the handicap under which a stranger, unacquainted with the customs of the country he is entering, often labors.

On the day following our leaving the ranch above described we reached the home of another





wealthy land proprietor and were invited to stop for dinner, the day being Sunday. It had been heralded abroad that Los Americans were to establish a bank at the capital, and our Government official introduced me as the head of the bank. I was received with extreme kindness and deference, and when it came time for us to eat was placed at the head of the table. Accustomed, as we all are in America, to accept the place to which we are assigned when dining in the home of others, I innocently accepted the place of honor, and without the least thought that I was breaking one of the most sacred rules of Mexican etiquette, calmly proceeded to eat my dinner. During the journey I had become very well acquainted with the wife of the Government official, she having been educated in San Francisco and speaking perfect English. We had conversed much of the time, and she had been interested in learning all she could about the United States, and in turn told me many things about Mexico. Her husband was unable to speak much English and joined but little in our conversation. The lady and I became quite friendly and, after the dinner was finished and she got an opportunity to speak to me aside, she said, "Oh, Mr. Everett, I am so sorry; you made a terrible mistake!" Her evident perturbation alarmed me considerably. "Oh, said



she, you should not have accepted the place at the head of the table; by all the rules and customs of our country the honor guest must be offered the head of the table, but he must never accept it, but must decline it with courteous thanks, as the host always occupies that position himself." Well, it was done and could not be helped, and I didn't let it worry me very much.

The next day we reached our destination to find that we were still many thousands of dollars short of the necessary coin to open the bank, and on the next day but one we must either open it or forfeit our concession. J. M. Neeland and Walter Everett had both reached the capital before I did, and somewhere between the coast and Tuxtla, which is situated high up in the mountains, Bert Lyon was struggling with a band of mules and peons, bringing an additional fifty thousand dollars. Neeland had bought every dollar in silver that could be bought in Tuxtla. As he expressed it, "The merchants here have scraped their tills to sell us every cent of silver money they had." The night before the time for opening the bank had arrived, and Walter and I slept in a room in the best hotel the town afforded, which would be considered a fairly good livery stable in our country. All night long we heard the clink of silver dollars as gamblers plied



their trade in the next room. Walter whispered to me the next morning, "They have been counting our money all night. I am afraid poor Bert is gone." This showed the state of anxiety in which we were. The morning of the day of opening was dawning; fifty thousand dollars in silver and our trusted and faithful friend were missing. We went to the bank building early in the day and made all the preparations we could for opening. Mr. Neeland had even invited all the notables of the city to join with us in the afternoon to celebrate the opening of the bank, but we were unable to open because of lack of silver. Hour after hour dragged by and we waited with the most intense anxiety for the appearance of Bert and his mules loaded with silver. We did not at that time know, as we afterward learned, how absolutely safe the country was under the rule of Diaz, and it seemed to us highly probable that our pack train had been waylaid, the silver taken and Bert Lyon killed.

At 12 o'clock, as we sat in the bank room, talking over our troubles, a great shout arose, and we rushed to the door to meet Bert with his peons, mules and silver all intact. Poor Bert had scarcely slept or eaten during the trip in his anxiety to carefully guard the treasure, and he was one of the worst looking white men I have ever



seen. His face was covered with two weeks' growth of beard; his hair and beard were matted with dust, his clothing in rags where they had been torn by the thorny brush along the trail, but he was triumphant and exultant; he had achieved the result sought, and arrived with his silver in time. At three o'clock in the afternoon, in the presence of all the notables of the city, we formally opened the Banco De Chiapas.

~~1~~ Bert Lyon, my family and I speedily settled down to life in the little Mexican city. As is the custom with nearly all the business men in Mexico, we lived in the same building in which we did business. The building was a large adobe, well built, and had formerly been a Catholic boarding school. In the kitchen was a huge Mexican stove, and if any of our American young people had seen it they would certainly wonder what it was. It consisted of a long bench built of brick, standing about as high as an ordinary table, and at regular intervals along the center of the top were small holes or depressions in which small charcoal fires were built, and over these fires was cooked all the food used by the school at the time it was running. We were obliged to use the same means of cooking to some extent, but secured a small stove as soon as possible.





Our isolation, owing to our lack of knowledge of Spanish, was made more bearable by the fact that the missionary, Rev. McDonald, whom I have mentioned, and his wife had decided that Tuxtla was as good a place as any for their missionary work and settled there near us. They were most excellent people and the lady and my wife became close friends.

Bert Lyon learned the language very rapidly, as did also my daughter Clara.

The Mexican people have customs that are altogether different from our own, so far as social matters are concerned. In Tuxtla no young Mexican would have thought for a moment of calling upon a young lady, nor had he attempted to call upon her, would he have been permitted by her parents to see her; but young people must get together somehow, and it was the custom on almost every evening, (for the evenings were always pleasant there), for the young people to go to the plaza. Around this plaza were extensive brick walks. The young women would link arms, just as American girls do, in twos or threes, and march around the plaza in one direction, and the young men and boys of the town would walk around the plaza in an opposite direction; but as they passed each other they would smile and look all sweet



things which they were forbidden to say to each other.

I have so far failed to mention that a wealthy lady of Los Angeles, a widow, Mrs. Coronell, who was half Mexican and half American, and spoke both languages perfectly, had joined our party and taken some stock in our enterprise. She being familiar with the customs of both countries, took Bert Lyon, who was young enough to have been her son, under her maternal wing and got huge enjoyment out of leading him to break the iron-clad Mexican rules of etiquette. For example, she became acquainted with the daughters of the most wealthy and influential citizens and would invite them to her house, where she introduced them to Bert and to American ways of doing things. So one night, in company with Mrs. Coronell, he went out to the plaza and marched with the young ladies. The young men of Mexico looked on in astonishment and envy. I said to a young Spaniard, who was working for his uncle in the city, "Antonio, why don't you do as Bert is doing?" (for by this time he and Bert had become friends) "and walk with the girls?" "Oh," said he, "Senior Everett, that will do for Bert, he is American; but it would not do for me."

The Mexican people thought it very wonderful that my wife and daughter should go freely about



the town entering the stores to do their trading, and of course we could not know how badly they may have thought of us. However, as we represented the financial power of the town in the bank, we were always treated with the utmost courtesy, at least to our faces. Next door to us and separated only by the adobe wall was the residence of Senor Ramon Rabasa, State Treasurer, one of the few honest Mexicans whom I met while in that country. He had a daughter named Guadalupe, whose pet name was Lupie, a girl about Clara's age, and they immediately became fast friends. Clara would go over to Lupie's at any time she felt like it with perfect freedom, and after we had lived there a few weeks Lupie actually came to our house, a distance of about three steps, without a servant following her, and she felt as if she had had about as much adventure as an American girl would to make a trip to Europe alone. I tell these things that you may know something of the manners and customs of the new country to which we had come.

Bert Lyon and I had just got the bank opened and fairly running when I began to receive letters from Mr. Neeland, who was acting as general manager of the railroad company, and Mr. Ed Piantoski, who was our chief engineer, each one desiring me to come to Tonala and make the other



be good. Each claimed that the other was hampering him. Piantoski, who was supposed to be in charge of the actual work of construction, stated that Mr. Neeland was constantly interfering with his plans and countermanding his orders. Mr. Neeland in his letter claimed that Piantoski would not do the work as he wished him to do it. I had no real authority in the railroad company, for I had gone there as a bank manager and not as a railroad official. However, they both thought that in the absence of Walter I represented the Everett interests, which was true, and that I ought to settle the troubles between them. It was one hundred and twenty-five miles over the mountains to Tonala, and an ox cart or a saddle horse was the only means of transportation. I finally left the bank in charge of Bert and made a hasty trip to Tonala, where I talked with each of the two men, and as is usually the case found that both were somewhat in the wrong. Of course, I tried to point this out and to get them to work together in harmony, giving each of them a little friendly lecture which, also is usually the case, had no other effect than to get them both down on me. Having no authority to order anything and neither of the two men having any inclination to listen to my advice, I returned to Tuxtla, having accomplished nothing except to





satisfy myself that without some change in the management the road would never be constructed.

In the meantime, John B. and A. B. Lyon were down at the railroad work; but because they were friends of the Everetts, they were regarded with jealousy by Neeland and Piantoski and were pointedly ignored by both. They were deeply interested in all our plans, having taken stock with us, and had come there to do something or anything that could be done to push the work. They wrote me, and they also wrote to Walter, stating the conditions, urging that something be done, because the time within which the first fifty kilometers of the road must be finished was rapidly passing and we were liable to lose our concession. Walter responded promptly and when he reached the scene of action took personal charge, ignoring Mr. Neeland as general manager, because we had discovered by that time that he had no qualifications for the position he held and that he simply hampered the efforts of others without doing anything himself. For days and weeks he sat in the office at Tonalá reading and writing letters without going out upon the work or giving any assistance in any way, his excuse being that he had *eniwas* in his feet. Now, *eniwas* are the product of an egg laid in the skin by some insect, which, by the way, I never saw. The eggs hatch



and form themselves a little pouch or pocket just beneath the skin and feed on the living flesh and blood of the victim. However, they are not the least painful, and the first intimation you have of their presence is a small swelling about the size of a pea. The treatment is very simple, consisting only of opening the skin sufficiently to remove the pouch, which, strangely enough, causes no bleeding, and washing the opening with some antiseptic. The wound quickly heals.

Walter pushed the railroad work vigorously for some weeks and Mr. Piantoski co-operated well with him. The work went rapidly forward, but Walter had duties that called him away and out of Mexico, and as soon as he went away the old strife between the manager and chief engineer started again. I found that I was powerless to remedy the trouble, being without any legal authority, and I notified the men who were furnishing the money, father, Mr. Milligan and the others, which resulted in a meeting in Mexico City, at which all the interests were represented, and it was agreed, with the consent of Mr. Neeland, that Mr. Piantoski should be given full and autocratic power. In short, he was to be the commander-in-chief; the rest of us were to take orders from him. He promised that if he could have full power he would push the work to the



limit, and I wish to say for Mr. Piantoski that he made good. He worked with feverish energy and the work went forward rapidly. Piantoski was an able young man. His chief fault was an excess of vanity and an overpowering fear that his merits would not be fully recognized.

About this time it was decided that it was best to sell the bank at Tuxtla, so that I might give my entire time to the railroad work, our force of Americans being so exceedingly small, and I moved my family from Tuxtla to Jalisco. I had no authority except to handle funds. It was my business to see that the money was there, that the men got their pay every Saturday night, and so far as possible that nothing was wasted. This work I performed to the best of my ability and with fairly good results.

Mr. Piantoski and a special friend of his, who acted as conductor of the train, a Mr. Cameron, and they and their wives arrogated to themselves all the authority in the camp. I could not ask the simplest and most harmless question about business without being snubbed. If I happened to ask an employee a question he was likely to say, as some of them actually did, "I am working for Mr. Piantoski." Naturally, as one of the men who was putting in money to construct the railroad, I resented this treatment, feeling that while Mr.



Piantoski was entitled to all authority, we having delegated it to him, I, as a representative of the men who were building the road, was entitled to respectful treatment. However, the all important thing was to finish the fifty kilometers before the expiration of the time fixed by our contract with the Mexican Government, and I took quietly all kinds of snubs and disrespectful treatment, but I did not forget.

On Sundays when work was not proceeding, Piantoski, his pet conductor, and their wives, would take the construction train and go some distance along the partly constructed line, and hold a picnic, on which joyous occasion the men who were building the road were sneered at and dubbed farmers—which we were, and of which we were proud—but which was intended by the speakers as a term of contempt. On one occasion the pet conductor remarked, “Well, I guess we will build some road this year. I hear they have a good corn crop in Nebraska.” These things always got back to the men who were concerned and they did not fail to reach our ears. When the fifty kilometers were finished and done in time, I informed Mr. Piantoski that his services were no longer required; for the finishing of the fifty kilometers ended the period for which absolute power had been granted to him. When I told





him of his discharge he said, "Mr. Everett, I was hired by the president of this company, and I decline to accept a discharge from any one else." Now, Walter had paid us a flying visit a few weeks before, had learned of the insults to the men who were doing the work and was just as indignant as I. He gave me a letter addressed to Piantoski discharging him, but suggesting that I do not deliver it if Piantoski accepted a verbal discharge from me; so when Mr. Piantoski made his not unexpected answer, I replied: "Ed, I wanted to spare your feelings all I could in this matter, but since you must have a formal discharge, here is a letter written to you from the president, to be delivered upon the completion of the fifty kilometers," and I delivered it to him. I never saw a man more crestfallen. It was evident that he believed that his successful completion of the fifty kilometers would outweigh any influence that I might have.

By this time I had learned something of the actual work of railroad building and something of the Americans who were in that part of Mexico, and we were fortunate in securing the services as chief engineer of a Mr. Bowman, who had all the ability and but few of the faults of Mr. Piantoski; but what was far more important, we secured the services, as superintendent of construc-



tion, of Henry Heintz, a young American of German descent, one of the most energetic and effective workers I have ever met. He had had, at that time, fifteen years' experience in railroad work in Mexico. He spoke the language fluently and knew Mexican character to a nicety. To him we granted the same full powers that had been granted Piantoski, but gave him frankly to understand that the men who were backing the enterprise must be treated with respect. However, in his case this was entirely unnecessary, as he knew his place and kept it. None of us ever attempted to interfere with his management or override his authority, and he on his part gave us the most respectful treatment, and we became his firm friends. To him more than to any other one person is due the credit of our successful completion of the first division of the road. It was no uncommon thing for him to get up in the middle of the night to ride from the camp where he was to some other camp to see that the men got to their work at the proper time in the morning and that all things were going well.

I remained on the ground most of the time of construction, merely to look after the finances and to keep harmony among the subordinates of Mr. Heinz. I seemed to possess something of the faculty for smoothing down rough places and sat-



isfying men who had become dissatisfied, and I looked after the paying out of the money. For the actual construction work I was entitled to no credit whatever. The first division of the road was completed under Mr. Heintz's management within the time specified, and the road was, for a new road, a very good one. However, we were tired of Mexico, its hardships, its privations, and I may add, its dangers, for during the three years in which we were building the road we lost by death out of the handful of Americans who furnished the brains for the work John B. Lyon, who died of a liver trouble, undoubtedly induced by the tropical climate; young Mr. Milligan, who had become division superintendent, and was a most estimable and efficient young man; William Mann, brother-in-law of Walter's, who was with us but a short time before he was stricken by one of the fierce fevers of the country and died in a few hours; our master mechanic, a Mr. Jennings, who was a wonder in his line, also died suddenly of fever. These men died natural deaths, and in addition thereto we had two startling tragedies. First was the death of our humble but trusted employee, old Chinese Tom, our cook. Tom had been with us from the start and we all regarded him with affection, because of his faithfulness and zeal in protecting the interests of the



company; also he was always kind and accommodating. One night, after every one had left the cookhouse, excepting Tom and his helper, another Chinaman, the men in the office, some fifty feet distant from the cookhouse, were aroused by a tremendous hubbub and outcry in the cookhouse, and rushed there, to find old Tom dead, literally chopped up with an ax, and his helper desperately wounded, with one arm entirely cut off, but still living, and the cookhouse turned into a shambles. Who did the murder we never knew. Indeed, we could hardly form a theory as to who did it or why it was done. The wounded Chinaman died in a few days, but absolutely refused to tell us who was the assailant or why the crime was committed.

The other tragedy occurred something like a year later and was the shooting in the night of our chief engineer, Mr. Bowman. He was found dead in his room after the sound of a pistol shot, and it has always been a question of doubt whether he shot himself accidentally or whether someone from the outside killed him by shooting into the room where he slept. He was dead and that was all we could learn about it. So both those murders have passed into history with their mysteries absolutely unsolved.





More than half of the white men who went from the north to assist in this work went to their graves within three years. These things and the tremendous strain of financing the project began to get upon our nerves. This Pan American Railroad is the only road, that I have ever heard of, which was built without the issue of bonds. The construction work was all done and paid for out of the pockets of the men who took up the work until we had finished this first division, but we began to want to get out from under the burden. An opportunity came to sell the road to people in Kansas City and the sale was effected. At about that time and before the road was delivered the bonds were placed upon it and a part of our pay for the road was taken in these bonds. At the finishing of this first division, also, the Mexican Government paid the first subsidy, and we drew at that time about twelve hundred thousand dollars in cash from the Mexican Government.

All of the survivors of the expedition, excepting A. B. Lyon, returned to their homes in the north, but A. B. remained in Mexico and married a beautiful young Mexican lady, who has since visited with him in his old home town and made a most favorable impression among all of Fred's many friends. We were all glad to return to



our native land and to be relieved of the pressure which had been upon us, but after all there is no period of our lives to which we look back with so much pleasure as the three years in which we struggled with all sorts of difficulties in the wildest part of Mexico.



# APPENDIX





JEREMIAH SHUMWAY







MRS. JEREMIAH SHUMWAY, NEE MARY MARIA PAINE



## JEREMIAH SHUMWAY

Was born October 15th 1827, at Oxford, Mass. He was the fifth generation in direct decent from Peter Shumway, a French hugenot who settled at Oxford about 1665, and from whom all the Shumways in the United States are decended. He was reared on the old Shumway farm with plenty of hard work as his principal education. He, however, managed to get enough of school education to enable him to become an excellent business man in his later years.

Jerry, as his friends always called him, learned the trade of carpenter and worked at it for a number of years.

After he was well established as a carpenter, he married Mary Maria Paine, a lineal descendant of Roger Williams.

Thus were united two families, both of which were originally driven to the new world by religious persecution—the one from France—the other from England. No better blood could New England boast than that thus blended.

The marriage proved a happy one in spite of the struggles and hardships incident to the lives of a poor young couple, just starting in life.



Jerry and his young wife, feeling that the new and rapidly developing west offered them better opportunities than did New England, decided to try their fortunes there.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1854, Jeremiah Shumway, in company with his wife's brothers, Duty and James Paine, his brother-in-law Charles Fenner Albee, and a friend, Dr. Batchelder, started west to investigate the country. They traveled from Burrilville, Rhode Island, to Worcester, Mass., thence to Buffalo, N. Y., thence to Detroit and Chicago and finally to Freeport, Illinois, by railroad, over lines newly built and with equipment that would now be thought primitive indeed. Freeport to Galena by stage.

From Galena they took a Mississippi River steamboat to Lansing, Iowa. From Lansing to Portland Prairie, a distance of some twenty miles, they walked. Portland Prairie was a little plateau arising from among the Mississippi bluffs, and lying partly in Minnesota and partly in Iowa, being cut by the state boundary. It was a beautiful prairie, some six or eight square miles in area. Nature had cleared it of the magnificent oak and hickory timber that surrounded it on all sides, relieving the settlers, to a very great extent of the task of "grubbing." The soil was magnificently fertile, the climate temperate.



Wild game was abundant, timber in seemingly inexhaustable quantities, within easy hauling distance.

The party of young men were pleased with the country, and, with the exception of Dr. Batchelder, entered into an agreement to settle there. This was in May, 1854.

Jeremiah bought land of John Edgar. Then Jeremiah, in company with Dr. Batchelder, who had decided not to settle there (which, however, he afterward did), went back to Rhode Island for his wife and his sister Ruth who was married to James Paine.

He, with his wife, child and sister, returned to Portland Prairie in June and took up the life of a pioneer, with its joys and sorrows, its defeats and its triumphs.

Then Charles F. Albee went back and brought out his family and the wife of Duty Paine. At this time a great stream of emigrants was pouring along the routes of travel from the east to what is now the middle west—Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota.

Cholera had been brought over from Europe, and these routes had become infected. Great numbers of the people who had started west, full of strength and hope, were stricken and they died with appalling quickness. A strong man, an





active healthy woman or a growing child would be suddenly seized, perhaps on a wagon road, a steamboat or a railroad train; in a few hours death ensued.

Sometimes families were nearly wiped out. The new settlements on and about Portland Prairie suffered terribly with the scourge. Fortunately none of Jeremiah's immediate friends died of the disease; but he and his brother-in-law, both carpenters and having tools, were called upon to make coffins for their less fortunate neighbors. In some instances while they would be working on a coffin for one member of a family, word would come to them to make a coffin for another member of the same family.

For a time gloom and fear hung over all in the new settlement.

Other troubles came also to our people. They had put up a little cabin for a temporary home, and one day a tremendous wind swept down upon them and unroofed the cabin. Mrs. Shumway was sick in bed, but fortunately she was not injured. Her sister, Mrs. Albee, who had recently arrived from the east, lost her trunk, which, by a freak of the storm was picked up and carried away. Much of her clothing was carried away and lost. After a time, their flood of troubles and misfortunes seemed to abate, and modest



prosperity came to them. They raised good crops and enjoyed good health.

More of their friends came from the east and settled there with them. The neighborhood was known far and wide as the Rhode Island Settlement. They established schools—a church was organized; they were an intelligent and God-fearing community, worthy of the grand New England ancestry from which they sprang.

Jeremiah Shumway and his noble wife were leaders in all that made for righteousness and intelligence. Children came to them rapidly—such children as might be expected from the son of a French Huguenot married to a daughter of the line of Roger Williams.

Children to be proud of. But the cloud of rebellion arose in the South. In the mind of Jeremiah Shumway duty seemed to point two ways. His country called: but to leave his young wife, in delicate health, with no money and five little children, was it his duty to go? Patriotism triumphed. For the very sake of those children, whom he worshiped, the country must be saved.

Having made the best provisions that his circumstances permitted for the comfort of his family, he entered the Union army in November, 1864, as a private, Company A, Fifth Minnesota Infantry.



On Thanksgiving day of 1864, he was at Fort Snelling, near St. Paul. Shortly after that he went to La Crosse, Wis., by stage, on his way to the front. While there he accidentally met one of his friends and neighbors, Franklin Everett, who, feeling the extreme hardship of Mr. Shumway being taken away from his family, told him that he knew of a single man who would be willing to go as a substitute for a reasonable sum, and offered to advance the money, which Shumway, at that time did not have. But, having put his hand to the plow, he determined not to turn back and gratefully declined the friendly offer.

From La Crosse, he went by train to Chicago, thence to Cairo, Ill., thence to Nashville, Tenn.

When the party of recruits, of whom Mr. Shumway was one, reached Nashville, a battle was imminent and no time was allowed them for drill.

Every man was needed for actual service. Mr. Shumway passed one night in sentry duty and then, on the third day after he reached the front went into the battle of Nashville. Of the company of new men who had come with Mr. Shumway as recruits for Company A, not one showed the white feather, although the battle was one of the mostly hotly contested actions of the war, as well as one of the most important in its results.



The 5th Minnesota took part in the grand charge that swept Hood's army into a wild retreat, which ended only with its utter disorganization.

The part of the battle line in which Company A was placed, was obliged to charge across an open corn field. This field was ankle deep in sticky mud and was constantly swept by the fire of the rebels, who were in a thick wood on the far edge of the field, and themselves, comparatively safe. Wading through the mud, a swift advance was not possible and many a brave fellow fell in the crossing. With Mr. Shumway in this charge were his friends and neighbors, Ellery Arnold, William Walker Everett (a grandson of the revolutionary hero, Josiah Everett 2nd) and Rufus Shumway, a younger brother of Jeremiah's. At last the terrible cornfield was crossed and the woods was reached. The enemy there were in confusion. Some of them were still fighting, some of them were surrendering and others were running away. Mr. Shumway saw a big confederate who was still fighting. The man was standing behind a tree deliberately loading and firing at our men. Jeremiah threw his gun to his shoulder and drew a bead on the broad grey back. Said Mr. Shumway (my father-in-law), in telling me about it many years afterward, "I was





just as cool as if I had been in the woods at home shooting squirrels." "I had taken careful aim and was already pressing the trigger, when a union officer struck up my gun with his sword, crying out, 'don't shoot, they are surrendering,' but that fellow was not surrendering; he just coolly walked off among the trees and escaped."

Probably it is well that the gun was struck up for Mr. Shumway was an experienced deer hunter and a dead shot. The death of the brave man in grey could in no way have changed the results of the war and we may hope and dream that he lived to return to his loved ones, to whom he was, perhaps as dear as is Jeremiah to his family. Still, it seems mighty tough, when you have been shot at by a hidden foe, himself in comparative security, for what seems like hours, that when you get in sight of that foe to be forbidden to take at least one crack at him. And so remarked father Shumway when telling me about it.

When the battle was over, Mr. Shumway heard that Rufus Shumway had been killed; but this proved untrue as Rufus escaped injury; but William Walker Everett had fallen in the terrible corn field with his cheek to the stalk of his musket, in the act of firing. A bullet had pierced his brain, causing instant death.



After the battle of Nashville Mr. Shumway's regiment was among the troops that pursued and finally utterly destroyed Hood's army.

During this pursuit, Mr. Shumway, unaccustomed to the climate and the privations and hardships, was taken sick. The army was proceeding by forced marches and he was unable, in spite of his utmost exertions, to keep up with the troops. The Captain of his company ordered him to stop where he was and follow up when he could; for all wagons and ambulances were full to overflowing and there was no chance to ride.

He was left at a house, and the Captain told the people of the house that he held them responsible for Mr. Shumway's safety. But as the latter remarked, when he told me the story, that amounted to nothing for the Captain was marching rapidly away and in all probability would never pass that way again. The Captain also relieved him of his gun and other accoutrements, telling him to follow along as soon as he felt able. As I remember, he did not stop at all, but followed up as fast as his feeble strength would permit.

But how desperate and forlorn was his situation. Alone and sick in an enemy's country—an enemy who were enraged by the defeat of their army and by the triumphant passage of the Union army through their locality.



It would seem that his death was almost certain; but the people of the South, though in the wrong, were a brave chivalrous people, neither cruel or murderous. And in his lonely tramp of several days, Mr. Shumway met nothing but kindness at their hands.

One night, sick, hungry and weary, almost unto death, he crept to the door of a little shack in the woods. The people were poor with a poverty that the people of the North have no conception of, and fear of the Union army had driven the men out into the woods. But the poor, half clothed and half starved women in the shanty showed the sick stranger who wore the hated blue, every kindness in their power. They gave him of such food as they had and told him he might sleep on the floor before the fireplace. He lay down and in his exhausted condition, soon fell asleep. He was awakened by a little confusion in the house and realized that several men had entered. That they were men who would look upon him as an enemy, he had no doubt. But he was weak, almost to helplessness and unarmed. What could he do? Nothing. So, as he told me, "I just lay still and went to sleep again," and when I awoke in the morning there was no one there but the women.



He arose from his hard, but warm and dry resting place, somewhat better of his illness and, after thanking and rewarding, as best he could his kind hostesses, resumed his effort to overtake the army.

Gradually he recovered his strength and after living in this precarious way for several days, succeeded in rejoining the regiment and resumed his duties. The breaking up of Hood's army was, by this time completed, or nearly so, and the Union troops went into winter quarters at Eastport, Alabama, a town on the Tennessee River. In the month of February they broke camp at Eastport and went down the river to New Orleans, where they again went into camp. From there they moved, in the month of March, to Mobile, Alabama. There the regiment took part in the battle of Mobile and the taking of Spanish Fort, and perhaps of Fort Blakely; but of the latter I am not sure. At the capture of Spanish Fort, Jeremiah and his friend Ellery Arnold had a close call. While they were waiting the formation of the lines for the final assault on the fort, their company was under heavy fire and was ordered to lie down that the men might be less exposed.

It was raining and Shumway and Arnold lay down together and drew a blanket over the two





of them to keep off, at least a part, of the moisture.

As they lay there, Shumway felt the blanket twitch and Arnold groaned. Are you hit, asked Jerry? "Yes," said Ellery, "I think my leg is smashed to bits." They proceeded to examine the injured limb and found that the missile that had hit it was a small, spent cannon ball, and that the leg was not crushed but only bruised and numbed. Probably, had the ball not been a spent one they would both have been either killed or maimed for life.

As it was, Mr. Shumway was uninjured and Arnold was able, with help, to hobble off the field. When the operations about Mobile were successfully finished, the army started to move to Montgomery, Alabama, where they expected another battle. On April 2, 1865, while on this march, there came suddenly to the ears of Jeremiah and his comrades, the sound of heavy firing. It was not expected that they would get in touch with the enemy for some days, and they were all much surprised. They all stopped to listen in great astonishment. Nearer and nearer rolled the line of fire, coming swiftly from the vanguard down the column of marching men.

Some said: "We have run afoul of the enemy



and they are licking us for the fight is coming this way fast."

Nearer and nearer, louder and louder came the steady roll of musketry.

The men gripped their guns and awaited orders in tense anxiety, glancing at each other in perplexity and bewilderment.

Then—mingled with the musketry they heard wild cheering.

Not the cries of beaten, fleeing men, but the mighty, exultant Hurrahs of patriots whose cause is won.

Nearer and nearer came the crashing volleys; nearer and nearer roared the exultant cheers. THEN—down the marching column—spurring his foaming horse to top speed—came an officer, wild with delight, swinging his hat and shouting: LEE'S SURRENDERED, LEE'S SURRENDERED.

An instant's pause to grasp the glad tidings, and then to each shoulder leaped the ready musket to peal the last shot as a salute to the peace that was in sight. Then, those mighty men of valor, who were not warriors but men of peace who were fighting to end war and to save their country, dropped their muskets, threw their hats in air and cheered in an ecstasy of exultation and joy. Strong, reserved men who seldom showed



emotion clasped each other in arms and shed tears—such tears as only such men can shed. So came the news of peace to the 5th Minnesota and to Jeremiah Shumway. The great war of brother against brother was at an end, and visions of a speedy return to home and loved ones arose in the minds of each soldier. How swiftly that thought took Mr. Shumway back to his devoted wife and five little tots, on far away Portland Prairie, we may well guess. But there was yet much to be done before these devoted fathers, husbands, brothers and sons could return to the loved families that so longed to greet them.

The great war was over. Rebellion was crushed but the South was without a government. There was no force except the United States Army to protect life and property. Civil law, there was none. Many Southern people applied to the Commanding General for guards, for the country was full of disbanded soldiers and freed negros. Many men were detailed for this duty, and Mr. Shumway was placed in charge of a fine plantation, the owner, a fine old Southern gentleman, looking to him for protection and also for control of the large number of freed negroes that remained on the plantation, and to whom the planter paid wages. These freed men looked upon the tall, quiet man in blue uniform as the representation



of the Lincoln government that had made them free. And they gave him loyal obedience without a question. Indeed, no man could have been better adapted for the position for he was a natural commander of men. The planter placed at his disposal a riding mule and a negro servant, and treated him with marked courtesy. For a considerable time he remained there, treated as an honored guest with nothing to do but ride about the country and represent the authority of Uncle Sam on the plantation.

One day he was riding to town. The lonely road wound through the pine woods. Suddenly he saw two horsemen following him and their actions were suspicious. He was unarmed, and the action of the men was rather alarming to a man alone in the woods. However, there was nothing that he could do but to continue on his way, which he did. The men rode up and passed him and after getting a considerable distance ahead, stopped and apparently waited for him. Then, after waiting for a short time, they apparently changed their minds, for they rode on and he saw them no more. What was their thought or idea, we can never know. But to an unarmed man in an enemy's country their actions were at least nerve racking. The planter was much pleased with Mr. Shumway and offered





strong inducements for him to stay permanently with the plantation. But Jeremiah was a thoroughly Northern man. A yankee of the purest type; and he yearned for his little farm in Minnesota.

As soon as he could secure his honorable discharge he hastened home. Having discharged his full duty to his country, he settled down to the labors of his farm and the care of his much loved family.

His farm was but eighty acres and his family was rather large; also Jeremiah Shumway and his noble, I might say angelic wife (for she was the sweetest Christian character that I ever encountered), were hospitable to the extreme; and some of the orphaned children of Mr. Shumway's dead sister usually lived with them. The Shumway home was always the special stopping place and secondary home of the Methodist circuit riders who served the struggling little pioneer church.

With all this it is easy to know that there was never any surplus money in the Shumway exchequer. But there was always comfort and plenty and a degree of happiness with which few homes are blessed.

Necessity and natural ability made a business man as well as a farmer of Mr. Shumway. He



dealt in live stock and took a mail contract from the Government. His friends used to say of him : "Jerry makes more money off the farm than he does on it."

In 1882, he went to Lyons, Nebraska, where many of his old friends, of pioneer days had preceded him years before, and where his sons Herbert and Edmund were already in business.

In Lyons, he went into the lumber business, in partnership with his son-in-law, Fremont Everett. Although he was then past his fiftieth year, and the business was entirely new to him, yet he made a success of it from the very start. Everett was practicing law, and Mr. Shumway had the full management of the business. Trade was good and he doubled the working capital with his profits the first year.

From that time to the present he has been one of the prominent business figures in Lyons. For thirty-four years he has done business with the people of Burt County and now in his extreme old age he is still among them, loved and trusted by all with whom he comes in contact.

His sainted wife long since passed to glory and he without fear awaits his call to join her.

I want to say to my children and grand children,



also to their posterity, if you would be worthy of such ancestry as Jeremiah Shumway and Mary Maria Shumway, nee Paine, you must indeed live WELL.















